NEWS / A2

Lacson wants P500-M textbook deal investigated

METRO / A21

Most crime-prone areas in Manila identified by police

WORLD / A24

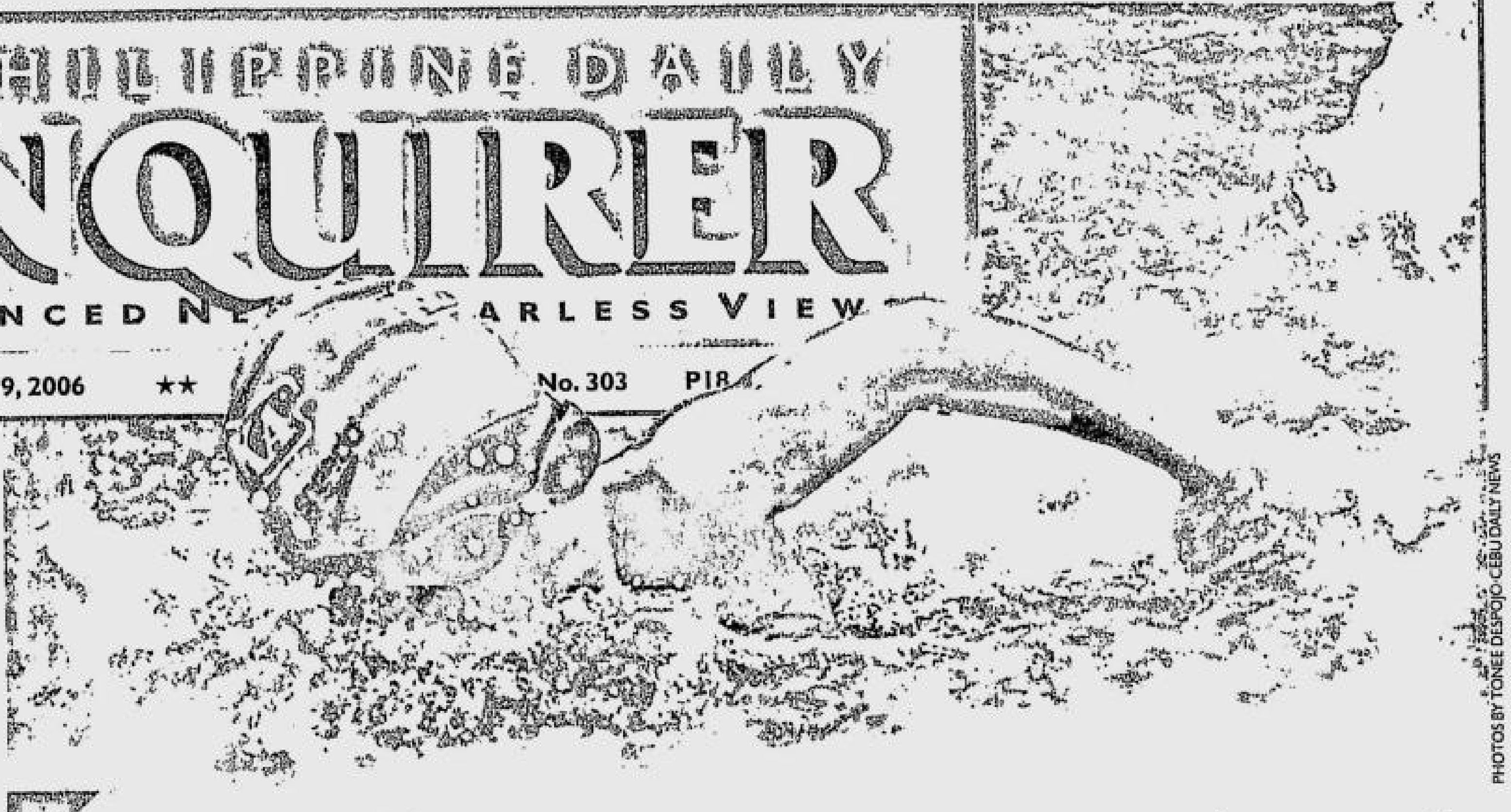
N. Korea to hold off nuke test till yearend, says report

LATE SPORTS / A19

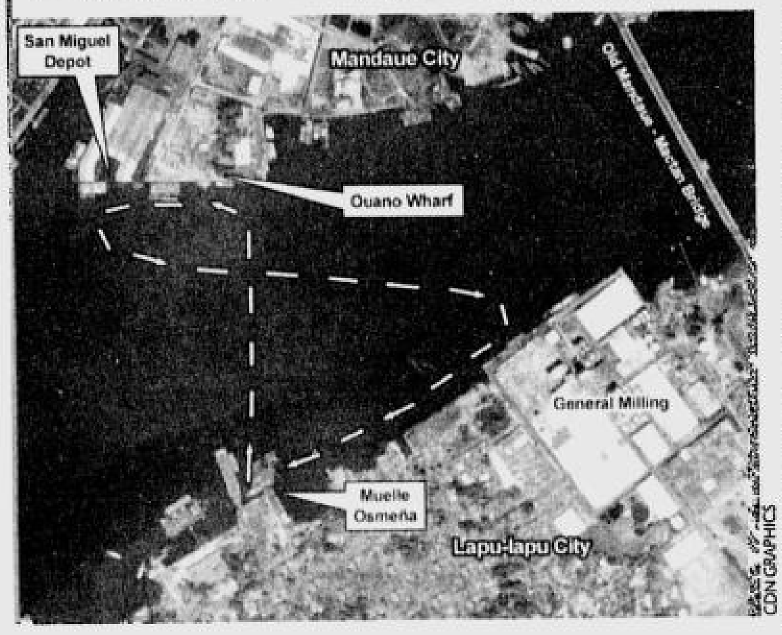
Starting today, Inquirer's main section will carry deadline-beating sports stories in Late Sports

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED N ARLESS VIEW
Monday, October 9, 2006 ★★ No. 303 P18

SWIMMING sensation Justin Daniel Junio is cheered by spectators after completing his record swim (see map below) across the Mactan Channel.



PHOTOS BY TONEE DESPOJO-CEBU DAILY NEWS



CDN GRAPHICS

5-year-old boy conquers Mactan Channel

By Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—HE LOOKED JUST like any other 5-year-old boy, until Justin Daniel Junio jumped into the water yesterday and set a record for swimming across the Mactan Channel.

Junio achieved what many grown-ups could not.

In nearly two hours, he swam 6 kilometers to cross the 3-km channel because he was swept away from the route by strong currents.

Hundreds of cheering Cebuanos watched the event on ferryboats that delayed their departures, on vessels under repair and maintenance at the Ouano wharf, and on the Mandaue-Mactan bridge.

They were not disappointed as they witnessed the youngest person to ever cross the channel.

"We are very happy that he made it. Ever since, we were confident that he would make it because he loves the water so much and it was his desire to cross the channel," retired Air Force Col. Florencio Junio said after his son emerged from the water.

Junio showed no sign of fatigue and stress while his mother, Ma. Vilena, 50, held him as cameras clicked. Asked by reporters if he was tired, he shook his head. He drank a glass of chocolate milk before he was driven to his hotel where a med-

5-YEAR-OLD/ A16

NPA blasts airport project

Are days of newspapers numbered?

By Amando Doronila

AS YOU READ THIS PIECE THIS morning, it has to be asked if you are reading it in a newspaper or on the Internet on a computer in front of you.

ANALYSIS

If dire predictions come true, the newspapers "in their current form will cease to exist within a decade or two." Some say that newspapers have a "use by" label tucked to their ears, like perishable consumer commodities.

Doomsday prophecies, such as this, have filled newspapers in the wake of a cover story in The Economist magazine (Aug. 26-Sept. 1) with the head, "Who Killed the Newspaper?"

A search on the Internet yielded hundreds of items under the label "death of newspapers," indicating the widespread concern in the media community over the fate of newspapers. This soul-searching emanates from jour-

ARE DAYS/ A15

STEEPLECHASE star Rene Herrera is preparing for his biggest race in the Asian Games in Doha. INQUIRER PHOTO

ROAD TO BEIJING

Olympic dreams depend on Asiad

By Jasmine W. Payo

(First of a series)

-TEAM *Report*
Fernando del Mundo
Chief

RENE HERRERA HASN'T stopped running since he won his first marathon at the age of 14.

Today, he is preparing for the biggest race of his life in the desert of Qatar, host to this year's Asian Games in December.

If he duplicates in Qatar's capital Doha the feat that landed him a gold in the 3,000-meter steeplechase in the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam in 2003 and again in the Manila edition of the event last year, Herrera may be going to Beijing for the 2008 Olympics.

"It's my first Asian Games and the focus is to get a medal," said Herrera, 27-year-old son of a security guard from Jordan in Guimaras. His first love was boxing but he gave it all up for what he thought was the more lucrative lure of athletics.

Along with other distance run-

OLYMPIC/ A16

'No long-term plans, programs'

(Editor's Note: INQUIRER *sports writer Marc Reyes recently sat down with Michael Keon for a rare interview. Keon, 51, a nephew of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, was director of Project: Gintong Alay, an ambitious program designed to produce medal winners in international competitions. It collapsed after the ouster of Marcos in 1986. A provincial*

NO LONG-TERM/ A16

KEON: A lot of politics in Philippine sports.

21 guns seized in Negros attack

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—REBUFFED in their demands for protection money, New People's Army rebels yesterday blew up P30 million worth of equipment being used to build a major airport that has been billed as a part of President Macapagal-Arroyo's mega projects, officials said.

No one was hurt in the 2 a.m. attack on the Japanese-funded P4.3-billion project in nearby Silay City, but the guerrillas escaped with dozens of guns seized from the guards.

"This is an act of terrorism and economic sabotage," Silay Mayor Carlo Gamban said. "It is the poor people who will suffer from the delay in the work because the airport will create many job opportunities and other businesses in the area."

A band of about 30 guerrillas carried out the attack, bombing the computerized batching plant and cement paver owned by the Korean firm, Hanjin International, and the power generator of

NPA/ A6

MABANGO NAMAN KAYA?

Gloria abloom in Singapore after 5 years

By Blanche S. Rivera

SINGAPORE—PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo may be a big thorn to the opposition in the Philippines, but she is blooming bright and red in this city-state, literally.

The Aranthera Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo orchids, named after the President

GLORIA/ A15

No proof of wider test leakage, says reviewer

By Nico Alconaba
Inquirer Mindanao Chief

DAVAO CITY—A BOARD REviewer who earlier said he believed the leakage of test questions during the nursing board examinations in June had also occurred in Davao and Tacloban cities, now says he has no evidence to support his claim.

"I would like to make it clear that what I said was hypothetical. There is no substantial evidence present at the moment," nursing board reviewer Joel Dumdum said in a phone interview yesterday.

Dumdum had earlier told the INQUIRER he had received information that a certain review center with branches in Davao City and other areas had offered the leaked test questions to a dean of a Davao nursing school a day before the exams were held.

"That information was only relayed to me," Dumdum said yesterday when asked if he actually talked to the dean.

He said stories about the test questions having been leaked in the Visayas and Mindanao were "hearsay."

Asked what he would say

NO PROOF/ A6

Palace swamped with angry text messages

By Christine O. Avendaño

NOT CONTENT WITH THE MEdia, some passers in the controversial nursing examinations and their parents have found another way to make sure their voices are heard by Malacañang.

They swamped the mobile phone of Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor with hundreds of text messages to register their protest against the holding of an exam retake.

Some of the messages came at odd hours.

The text offensive has come at a time when President Macapagal-Arroyo and her Cabinet are

PALACE/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will continue to experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/10/08/06

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Ombudsman home, says ready to defend decision

By Norman Bordadora

OMBUDSMAN MERCEDITAS GUTIERREZ planed in yesterday afternoon and told reporters she was ready to defend the decision to clear Commision on Elections officials and Mega Pacific Consortium executives of any wrongdoing in the failed billion-peso poll automation contract.

Gutierrez arrived a week after she approved the findings of the Ombudsman panel that cleared Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, other commissioners and Mega Pacific executives of possible graft.

"Of course, of course," Gutierrez said when asked if she was ready to explain to the Supreme Court the panel findings she had signed before leaving to attend a three-day conference in Switzerland.

"If there's a petition that will be filed before the Supreme Court, the Ombudsman will be asked to respond," she said.

In a seeming hurry, Gutierrez answered some questions from the media. She said she would address at a news conference the issues raised on the rather unpopular findings of the panel chaired by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Orlando Casimiro.

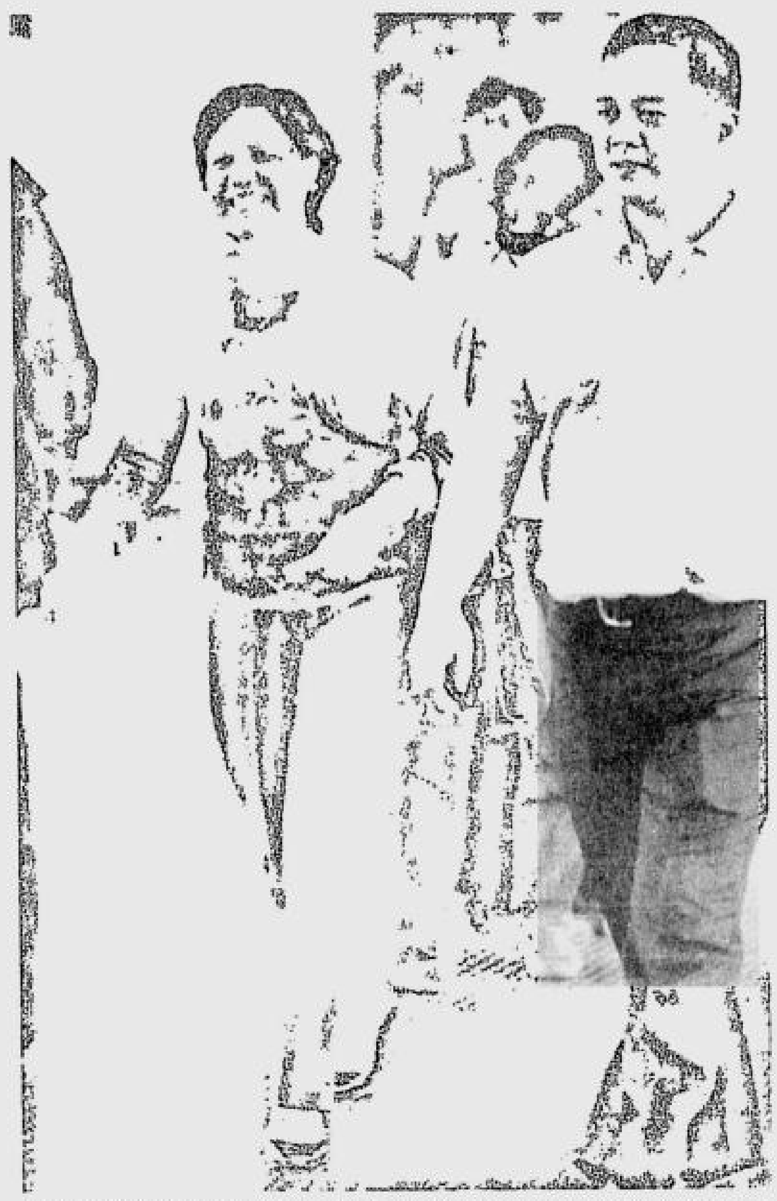
Former Senate President Jovito Salonga, who had been waiting for Gutierrez's return, told the INQUIRER yesterday that the Ombudsman, in clearing Abalos et al. of any criminal liability, clearly missed the "lies" allegedly told by the Comelec chair and Mega Pacific executives which made the deal appear to be above-board.

"The sworn testimony of Chairman Abalos before the Senate blue ribbon committee on Sept. 21, 2004, where, among other things, he said, 'I do not familiarize with Comelec suppliers' (is) an obvious lie, as exposed by graft investigator Maria Elena Roxas," Salonga said.

"Roxas' findings would show that Abalos stood as one of the sponsors in the wedding of a child of the Tansipeks (a couple who owns a substantial stake in Mega Pacific)," he said in an interview.

Salonga said that Enrique Tansipek, Mega Pacific executive Willie Yu and commissioners Abalos, Ralph Lantion, Rufino Javier, Resureccion Borra and Luzviminda Tancangco all traveled to South Korea in 2001, 2002 and 2003.

"The absurd consequences of the Ombudsman's sweeping exoneration cannot be missed: A crime was committed by certain Comelec officials who have been cleared; public funds amounting to more than a billion pesos had been taken or received by the shareholders of Mega Pacific but all of them are now scot-free," he said.



OMBUDSMAN Merceditas Gutierrez is happy to be home to answer questions on the controversial Comelec deal. JESS YUSON

Lacson seeks probe of P500-M textbook publishing contract

By TJ Burgonio

OPPOSITION SEN. PANFILO LACSON is seeking a Senate inquiry into the P500-million textbook supply contract awarded to Vibal Publishing House Inc. and a foreign partner last month although they were earlier disqualified for alleged conflict of interest.

Lacson has filed a resolution directing the blue ribbon committee and the education committee to look into the "unfair competition" in the award of contracts under the Department of Education's textbook procurement program and possible violation of procurement laws.

He said the P500-million contract was just the latest in a series of instances from 1999 to 2004 during which the bulk of the bid awards was given to the Vibal Group.

"If there's a monopoly in the supply of textbooks, there's a tendency that the quality of textbooks will deteriorate because of unfair competition," he said in an interview.

In his resolution, Lacson said the Department of Budget and Management awarded contracts in late September to Vibal, Watana Phanit Printing and Publishing Co. Ltd. and Daewoo International Corp. to supply Sibika and HeKaSi textbooks and teachers' manuals.

Under the DBM's Sept. 25 notification of bidding results, Vibal was to print 2.9 million Sibika 1 textbooks and 84,104 manuals for P133.2 million; 1.2 million Sibika 3 textbooks and 36,068 manuals for P53.9 million, and 500,466 HeKaSi textbooks and 14,355 manuals for P21.6 million.

Watana's contract stipulated that it produce 2.3 million Sibika textbooks and 67,379 manuals for $1.8 million and P433,095.95; 2.092 million HeKaSi 4 textbooks and 59,976 manuals for $1.9 million and P379.767.80, and 1.5 million HeKaSi 5 textbooks and 44,068 manuals for $1.4 million and P238,759.25.

Daewoo, for its part, won a contract to print 952,804 Sibika textbooks and 7,311 manuals worth $791,590.28 and P12.8 million.

The program was funded by a grant from the World Bank, according to Lacson.

Quoting documents from DBM, Lacson, however, said the award came seven months after DBM's inter-agency bids and awards committee (IABAC) on Feb. 28 resolved to disqualify Vibal and Watana for conflict of interest.

The DepEd's technical working group on Jan. 31 recommended the disqualification of Vibal and Watana, and other members of the Vibal Group of bidders, for the same reason, according to him.

Lacson said the IABAC's turnaround came after a World Bank representative disagreed with the rejection of the bids of the Vibal Group, saying the fact that they had the same stockholders did not prove they were engaged in corrupt behavior.

Amid threat of abolition, Senate marks 90th anniversary

THE SENATE WILL MARK ITS 90th anniversary this week amid threats of abolition.

Proponents of Charter change are bent on amending the Constitution to pave the way for a unicameral legislature under a parliamentary form of government.

"The Senate has earned its keep regardless of what Cha-cha will do. The anniversary is still worth celebrating," said Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is set to speak at today's flag-raising ceremony.

The fact that the upper chamber mark its 90 years of existence at a time the administration is vigorously pursuing a two-pronged strategy to tinker with the Charter and abolish the bicameral Congress isn't lost on some senators.

But like his colleagues, Pimentel is confident the House-initiated constituent assembly and the people's initiative, backed by the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) and Sigaw ng Bayan, will not prosper because of their legal and constitutional flaws.

"No way they will succeed legally. [President] Gloria [Macapagal-Arroyo] and [Speaker] Jose de Venecia will use extralegal ways to get Cha-cha through. We will block it with all legal means possible. The law is on our side and the people's righteous anger, too," he said.

The Senate has opposed the people's initiative every step of the way. When Ulap and Sigaw filed a petition for amendment before the Commission on Elections, the Senate minority bloc filed a petition to junk this on the ground the current initiative law was inadequate to cover the exercise.

After the Comelec dismissed the petition for amendment and the two proponents brought the matter before the Supreme Court, the Senate as a whole filed a petition to oppose the initiative.

In the event the people's initiative is junked with finality by the high court, administration allies are pinning their hopes on the constituent assembly as the mode to amend the Charter.

But the senators are also prepared for this eventuality and have passed a resolution reminding their counterparts in the House that they could not convene a constituent assembly and introduce amendments on their own without the participation of the Senate.

For the whole month of October, the Senate has lined up a series of activities, including outreach programs, to mark its anniversary, but without much fanfare.

The Senate was first convened on Oct. 16, 1916, seven months after the US Congress enacted the Jones Law.

In a tribute to lawmakers, the Senate has asked former Senate President Ernesto Maceda, Pimentel, Senate Pro Tempore Juan Flavier and former Sen. Joey Lina to speak at its Monday morning flag-raising ceremonies from Oct. 2 to Oct. 30. *TJ Burgonio*

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Palace: Let 'true voice' be heard

SAYING IT WANTED THE "TRUE voice" of the people to be heard, Malacañang yesterday urged groups opposed to the people's initiative mode to amend the Constitution to allow the process to proceed.

Amid charges by the OneVoice citizens' group that the gathering of signatures for the people's initiative by allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo had been attended by fraud, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the Charter change process should be allowed to continue and be put to the test.

"Instead of mudslinging over the issue of Charter change, we should let the process take its constitutional course," Bunye said.

"If critics of Charter change are confident that their arguments would be upheld by the people, then there is no reason they should refuse to put it to a test," the presidential spokesperson said.

Two groups, the government Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines and the private Sigaw ng Bayan, are pushing for Charter change and were principally behind the nationwide signature-gathering campaign.

OneVoice and the other groups are expected to file in the Supreme Court this week a petition claiming Ulap and Sigaw ng Bayan had failed to gather the needed signatures for a people's initiative to be binding.

Christine O. Avendaño

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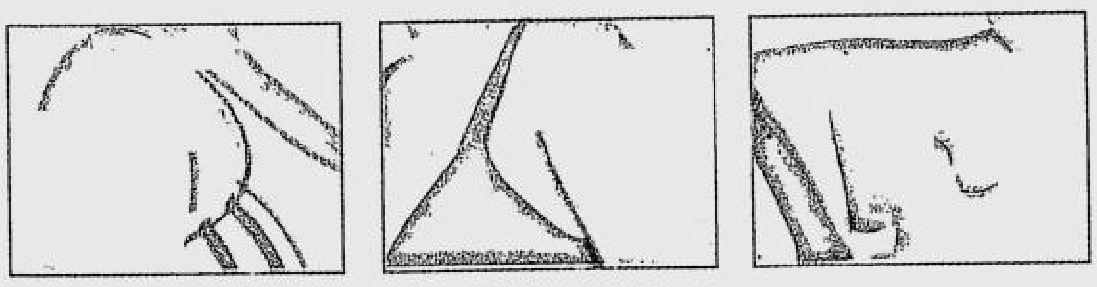

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Town raps bird flu task force

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CANDABA, PAMPANGA—THE LOCAL GOVernment has refused to follow the request plan of the avian influenza task force of the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of Animal Industry to collect blood and fecal samples of birds, ducks and poultry in 33 villages in this town.

The collection of 1,000 samples, or at least 30 specimens per village, was supposed to start on Sept. 25 and end on Oct. 9, according to a request made by veterinarian Augusto Baluyut in a letter dated Aug. 31.

"It is not that we are afraid of confirmation of an incidence of bird flu. I am opposed [to the collection of samples] because we have lost trust in the task force," Mayor Jerry Pelayo told the INQUIRER yesterday.

According to Pelayo, the task force has not heeded the town government's request for mobile laboratories, monitoring patrols and feed support for raisers who agreed not to let loose their ducks in the field.

"The [antibird flu] posters came when the [migratory] birds were gone. We were left to fend for ourselves," he said.

Pelayo said he was angry over what he called the "inaction and absence of support" from the task force.

As the bird flu virus struck Asia and killed humans, he warned that Candaba—home to a large population of migratory birds and host to or surrounded by some 400 poultry farms —could likely become "ground zero" of the problem.

"It's sad that while we were taking action at the local level, our initiatives have not been supported," Pelayo said.

He decried reports that the Department of Health had stocked up on P80 million worth of Tamiflu, a medicine supposed to strengthen human defense against the virus.

This could be immediately confirmed with the DOH or the task force.

Pelayo said he got the information from the task force itself. "Instead of going strong on preventive measures, the task force chose to stock up on drugs that are not being used now," he said.

Birdwatching clubs and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, meanwhile, started the annual Asian Waterbirds Census, as migratory birds began flocking to the Candaba Swamp this month to seek winter refuge and to breed.

A 102-hectare private fishpond, declared a protected haven for migratory birds, became the starting point of a two-day meeting by at least 40 wetlands conservationists from 20 countries in Asia yesterday.

The participants are country representatives to the Asian Waterbirds Census, held usually every January since 1987, according to Dr. Taej Mundkur, coordinator of the Wetlands International (WI) in South Asia, organizer of the meeting.

This was the group's first meeting in the Philippines, said Carlo Custodio, chief of the ecosystem management specialist section of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau of the DENR.

The meeting aims to establish "a more coordinated census next year, [and] get a snapshot of the distribution [of the birds]," Mundkur told the INQUIRER before setting out for the birdwatching event.

The census has drawn 10,000 volunteers and more are needed not only to count the birds, but also to promote the conservation of wetlands as habitat for birds and a water source for people.

SHIRLEY Hee of the Panaga Natural History Society releases a Philippine mallard, a rare duck species, at the Candaba Swamp.

TONETTE T. OREJAS / INQUIRER CENTRAL LUZON

Dagupan teaches other cities how to cope with disaster

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—REPRESENTATIVES OF five calamity-prone Asian cities shared their experiences and learned from residents here how to prepare for and cope with disaster.

The cities, including coastal Dagupan, are part of Project Promise (Program for Hydro-Meteorological Disaster Mitigation in Secondary Cities in Asia), a three-year project that was started last year.

The Thailand-based Asian Disaster Preparedness coordinates the program funded by the United States Agency for International Development-Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance.

The other cities in the program are Hyderabad, Pakistan; Chittagong, Bangladesh; Kalutara, Sri Lanka, and Da Nang, Vietnam.

Representatives from the five cities held a three-day conference in Manila before they visited Dagupan last week.

They went around to see how local residents prepared for disaster by using improvised early warning systems and having evacuation plans.

In Barangay Tebeng, they were given samples of kanongkong, a bamboo instrument that villagers tap to warn others of rising floodwater.

After the tour, Robert Barton, regional adviser for Asia-Pacific of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance, said the agency made a wise choice when it picked Dagupan to be one of the models for the project.

"We rate Dagupan very highly. The strong leadership and the commitment of the citizens are indications that the program will be sustained even after the project ends," Barton told reporters.

B.B.M. Mozharul Huq, program coordinator of the Bangladesh Disaster Preparedness Center, said that like the Philippines, his country was trying to live with disasters.

"We have learned to live with floods [and] we have an elaborate system of preparedness," he said.

He said he was impressed by the Dagupan residents.

"They know what to do. Project Promise will come and go but if people know what to do, they can save the lives of other people at risk," he said.

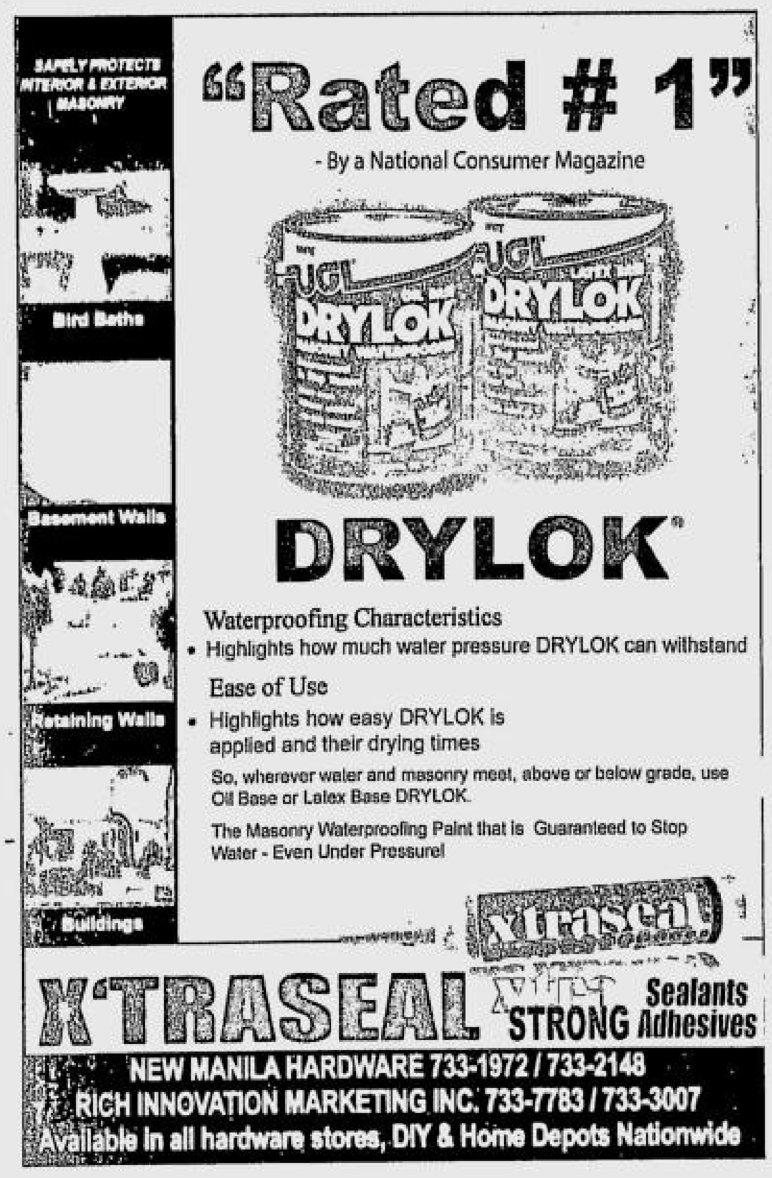
Vietnamese delegate Doung Thi Hoai Trang said her countrymen had a lot to learn from Dagupan.

"You have made very good progress. You have great participation from the community to the city level. Let us learn and share from each other," she said.

Dagupan Mayor Benjamin Lim said the city would continue to promote disaster preparedness because many towns in the country were still in the dark when it came to how to cope with calamities.

Dagupan is disaster-prone because it is a catch basin for floodwaters in the province of Pangasinan.

A magnitude 7.7 earthquake also struck the city on July 16, 1990, damaging many structures. Some sections of Dagupan sunk and these became even more vulnerable to flooding.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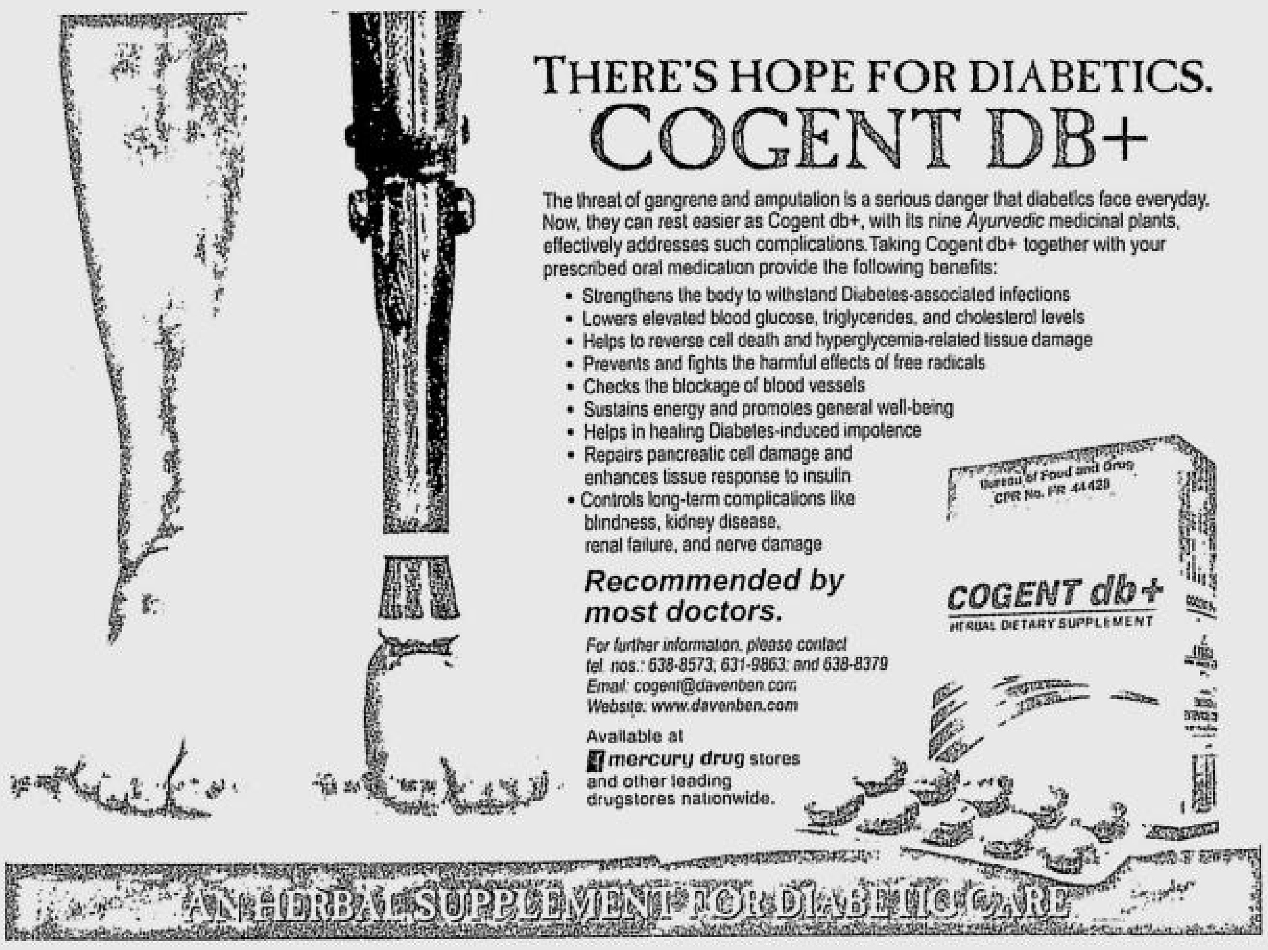
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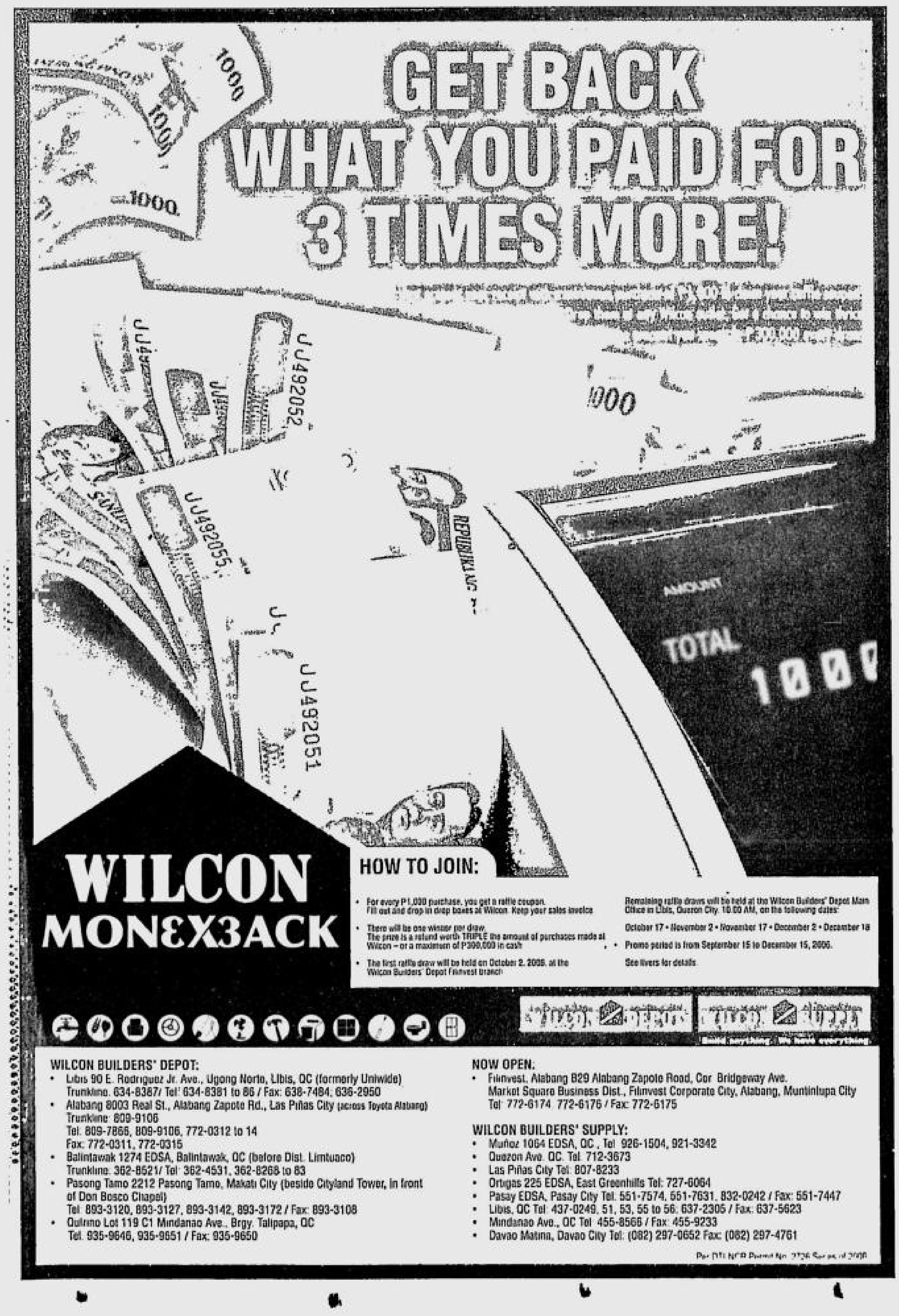
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Experts call for mosquito eradication to fight dengue

By Blanche S. Rivera

SINGAPORE—INCREASED POPULATION density in developing countries and the mobility of people in the developed world have led health research experts here to call for a back-to-basics mosquito-eradication program in countries affected by dengue, including the Philippines.

The Novartis Institute for Tropical Diseases (NITD), a public-private venture of pharmaceutical giant Novartis and the Singapore Economic Development Board, said governments should note the alarming statistics on the reemergence of the mosquito-borne disease.

There are some 50 million cases of dengue, dengue hemorrhagic fever (DHF) and dengue shock syndrome every year, most of them in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific, according to the World Health Organization. This leads to around 500,000 hospitalizations per year and an estimated 12,000 deaths.

"Dengue is diabolic. They (infected people) just bleed inside and outside. It's like ebola," NITD chair Paul Herrling said at a press briefing.

Some 2.5 billion people are at risk for dengue and DHF. The Philippines' Department of Health has reported nearly 23,000 dengue cases this year alone. In Singapore, dengue infections skyrocketed from 4,000 four years ago to 18,000 last year.

"It looks like, currently, we are on a very clear trend of an increase... This increase probably has to do with mobility and the density of the population. Of course it could also be other things, maybe the virus has evolved. We don't know. That's what we have to find out," Herrling said.

He said the exponential increase in the number of dengue cases has baffled health experts and scientists, who have started taking a closer look at dengue and its possible treatment.

The NITD, whose research is focused on drugs to fight dengue and tuberculosis, is doing genome-focused studies to find out why some people infected with dengue die while others manage to overcome it, and how this could be addressed.

Dengue is a mosquito-borne viral infection (genus Flavivirus) that causes fever, severe joint pain that could lead to shock, hemorrhage and, in the worst cases, death. DHF has a fatality rate that can exceed 20 percent, especially among children.

DHF was first recognized as potentially fatal during World War II when epidemics among soldiers were reported in the Philippines and Thailand. Since the war, dengue epidemics reemerged about ten years ago, Herrling said.

"Dengue was important during the war, but then the mosquitoes got killed by DDT (dichlorodiphenyltrichloroethane)and dengue disappeared. Now people don't use DDT anymore so the mosquitoes are back. Dengue is back and the number of people with dengue is growing exponentially," he said.

The NITD chief is pushing for a renewed drive against mosquitoes, especially in tropical countries which are at high risk for dengue and its accompanying economic burden.

"What governments can do now is mosquito control. Reduce the population of mosquitoes, kill the larvae. Education is important, especially in endemic countries like the Philippines where there are many children," Herrling said.

He said NITD has been working on an antiviral drug for dengue for the last three years, but at this stage, it could take another 10 to 12 years.

"We have already selected some enzymes. We have the very first drug this year that could go into the development stage," Herrling said, adding that NITD was also testing some natural compounds against the virus.

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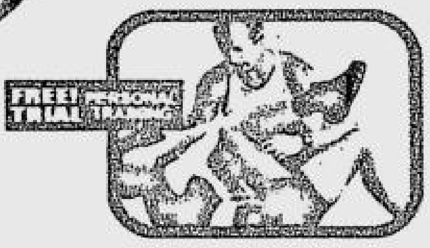

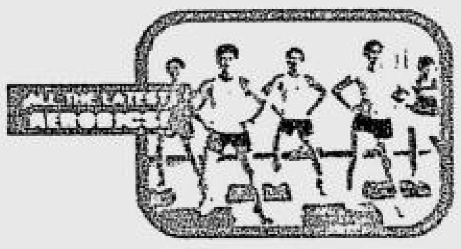

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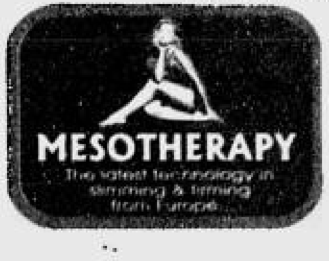

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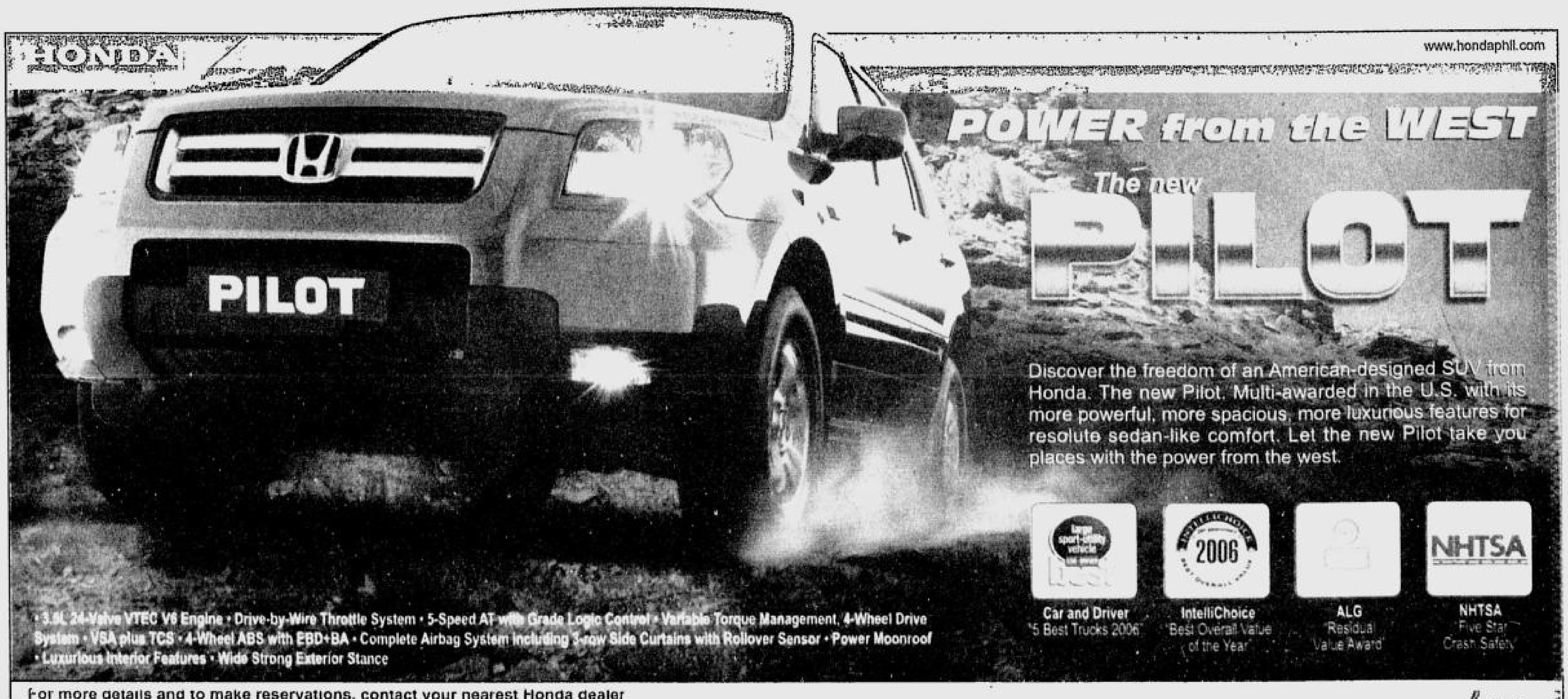

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NPA blasts airport project

From page A1

the Japanese company, Takinaka Itochu.

The rebels took only 30 minutes to disarm the guards and blow up the equipment, Gamban said.

The Negros Occidental airport project, located 14 kilometers north of Bacolod, is funded partly by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation and was scheduled for completion in the second quarter of next year, Transportation Assistant Secretary Ricardo Tan said.

The military has accused the NPA of collecting so-called revolutionary taxes to help finance its operations after its foreign funding dried up.

It said the NPA collects at least P30 million a month in protection money in Mindanao, P20 million a month in Central Luzon, and about the same amount in the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) area.

The rebel targets include business companies and individuals, such as politicians.

At least eight attacks by NPA rebels demanding such taxes had been reported during the past year. These included raids on the facilities of Globe Telecommunications and bus companies.

In August, party-list Rep. Etta Rosales condemned the NPA's torching of a truck owned by AlterTrade Corp. in Bacolod as proof of "the darker side of the revolutionary forces."

The Silay airport was one of the priority mega-projects cited by Ms Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address in July.

21 guns plus radios

Gov. Joseph Marañon said the attack would have an adverse impact on the province's economy.

"By hampering the construction of the airport, the rebels will delay needed economic progress for the people with the job opportunities it will create, and vital tourism development," Marañon said.

The rebels, led by a certain Sakay and armed with high-powered firearms, used improvised explosive devices made of gasoline and fertilizer, Army Col. Felicisimo Budiongan said.

Budiongan said the rebels carted away 18 .38-cal. revolvers, three shotguns, and eight handheld radios.

Oplan Hakot Armas

Twenty-one security guards were disarmed.

Budiongan said the rebels staged the attack after the project builders refused to pay revolutionary taxes.

He said the rebels had sent the firm an extortion letter asking for an unspecified amount.

"This is also part of the NPA's Oplan Hakot Armas to collect firearms to give to its new recruits," Budiongan said.

Tan said he would discuss with the contractors "how the project could be finished on schedule in spite of the bombing, by possibly tapping the use of a local batching plant."

Officials said a security detachment would be placed at the airport site to protect the area from further attacks.

Police said the attack could delay completion of the project for several months.

South Korean engineers and Filipino workers who live at the site were not harmed, Silay police chief Supt. Celestino Guara said. He said that Japanese engineers were staying at a hotel away from the site.

Army troops and policemen were pursuing the attackers.

The rebels have about 7,200 fighters operating in 5 percent of all villages nationwide and attack rural troops, police and businesses who refuse their extortion demands, according to the military.

Two years ago, the rebels withdrew from Norwegian-brokered peace talks on ending 37 years of their insurgency, saying the Arroyo administration was not making efforts to remove them from the US and European lists of terrorist organizations. *With a report from AP*

IN THE KNOW

Silay airport project

IN MAY 2004, THE DEPARTMENT OF Transportation and Communications signed a contract with the Japanese consortium Takenaka-Itochu Joint Venture System to build a world-class airport in Silay City in Negros Occidental.

The airport is one of the projects under the super region development program that President Arroyo outlined in her 2006 State of the Nation Address in July. It is situated on a 188-hectare property.

Other major airport projects included in the program are the P8.39-billion Diosdado Macapagal Airport at Clark, the P3.44-billion Daraga, Albay, International Airport and the P8.7-billion New Iloilo Airport. *Inquirer Research*

No proof of test leakage spread …

From page A1

should the National Bureau of Investigation question him on what he knew about the controversy, Dumdum said he "will disclose the information I have," which he said was a "relayed" story.

Dumdum's latest statement contradicted what he said in an interview with the INQUIRER on Saturday.

While he had pointed out on Saturday that the information he had had come from other people—specifically from some of his students—Dumdum was very clear during that first interview that he believed the information given him was correct.

He also said in that Saturday interview that the information he had should come out to show the extent of the test leakage.

He even told the INQUIRER then that "the leakage is everywhere."

Unfair to passers

A registered nurse and a former nursing professor, Dumdum said—as he reiterated yesterday—that he was willing to tell the NBI what he knew.

The dean of a nursing school in Tacloban City denounced the claim that cheating took place in Tacloban as baseless and unfair.

Antonio Lim, dean of St. Scholastica's School of Health and Sciences, said that while the school hired a review center, it was not among those linked to the leakage.

"None of our 91 students who took the Nursing Licensure Examination were involved in that so-called leakage," Lim told the INQUIRER. "It is so unfair to the students and to our school."

Lim said 63 students from the school passed the exam, and one of them, Margaret Leslie Bandoy, landed in the 10th spot with an 80.41-percent rating.

"To claim that our students passed the examination because they benefited from leakage is simply absurd and unthinkable. We monitored our students during their reviews and even during the time they took the examination," Lim said.

The dean said the school would not accept a decision by the government for an exam retake.

He urged the government to solve the controversy "once and for all for the good of the country and the students involved."

More than 17,000 examinees passed the tests, out of 42,000 who took them.

The controversy has stirred a national uproar and reached the courts as well as the Office of the President, which has said it will decide shortly on whether there should be a retake of the exams.

Reacting to Dumdum's initial allegations, board exam passer Gerard Gumban said Dumdum's statements were "unfair for us here in Davao who passed the exams fair and square."

Extreme solution

"The NBI should make its own probe if there really was leakage here in Davao. Let's not just readily believe in hearsay. Let us confirm first before we act on it. That's one of the duties of a nurse," Gumban said.

Gumban even went to the extreme of calling on every licensed nurse to retake the board exams.

"The issue of leakage has been there for a long time now, and unluckily, it is our batch (June 2006) that has been dragged into this controversy," he said.

"To erase the stigma, let all of us nurses, including deans of colleges of nursing that are pushing for a retake, retake the NLE to restore the credibility and integrity of the nursing profession."

No credibility?

"Let us have a retake at the same time because we really would never know if there were leakages in past examinations," he said.

Eric Caballero, a nursing graduate from the Davao Doctors College, said Dumdum, whom he considered a mentor and a friend, did not have the credibility "to be saying all these things."

"He is saying that his statements were hypothetical. If they were hypothetical, why would he allow himself to be interviewed?" Caballero said.

5 witnesses

Before Dumdum made his initial allegations, the president of the faculty association of the University of Santo Tomas' College of Nursing, Rene Luis Tadle, also spoke about a supposed widespread test leakage.

Tadle said that five examinees from Baguio City had submitted affidavits to the NBI stating that they received leaked questions for Tests 1 and 2, covering fundamentals of nursing and maternal and child health care.

An NBI official, who was supposedly keeping the affidavits, merely said "no comment" when asked by the INQUIRER about them.

The NBI investigation has centered on allegations that the leakage involved Tests 3 and 5, covering medical/surgical nursing and psychiatric nursing.

No whitewash

Yesterday, Tadle pressed for an exhaustive NBI probe "without whitewash."

In a phone interview, Tadle said the NBI could "detect leakage" by merely comparing the witnesses' manuscripts of the leaked questions with the actual test questions.

Tadle said that based on their accounts given to him, the five nursing graduates who submitted the affidavits were instructed "to go to a place" where they were informed about questions that would appear in the actual exams, and were coached on the key words of a question and its answer.

Tadle said he was told that they got 50 questions for each of the two tests.

"Yes, it's a different review center," Tadle said, when asked if the source of the leaked questions for Tests 1 and 2 was different from the Inress review center on Claro M. Recto Avenue in Manila and the Gapuz review center in Baguio, which had been previously linked to the leakage.

Senate probe

"So we would expect more names in the review center industry to come out. And we agree with everyone that there's a need to punish those involved," he said.

Tadle said that contrary to reports, his group had not decided whether to call for a retake of the entire exam, saying it would first await results of the NBI investigation.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who has reclaimed chairmanship of the investigating civil service committee, scheduled for Thursday the next Senate hearing on the leakage. He plans to invite Tadle and, if possible, the five new witnesses.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez downplayed the claims of the five new witnesses that the cheating involved four out of five subjects, and not just two.

"Five witnesses do not necessarily represent a national (reach)," Gonzalez said. "You have to consider that some of them may be out to get publicity … Some may be coming out due to rivalries among review centers."

But Gonzalez admitted that mobile phones, electronic mails and fax transmissions could have helped spread the leakage nationwide.

"It's also possible that in this time of technology, those in Jolo can also receive text messages … Still you cannot say that the leak occurred in the whole of Mindanao," he said. *With reports from Joey Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas and TJ Burgonio and Armand N. Nocum in Manila*

Palace swamped with angry text messages

From page A1

preparing to meet tomorrow to decide whether to go ahead with their earlier decision to order a retake of the exam.

300 messages

Malacañang is expected to take into consideration the findings of the National Bureau of Investigation on who among the more than 17,000 examinees who passed the June exams benefited from leaked test questions.

Defensor said yesterday he had received about 300 text messages the past week from nursing students and their parents. Several messages came from Cebu.

And all of them said they did not benefit from the leakage. They also wanted Ms Arroyo to know they opposed retaking the tests.

"There were some texters who argued why they should have to suffer when those who benefited from the leakage of the test questions were in Manila and Baguio," Defensor said.

Other texters asked why Malacañang should believe the person who blew the whistle on the leak.

Plea for understanding

Defensor said three messages came from "angry" texters who said it was unfair of the Palace to order a retake of the exam. One of the texters was from Cebu and another from Capiz.

"I told them I understand how they were feeling and for them to be patient as we will try to resolve the issue fairly," Defensor said.

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PNP seeks foreign help to secure Asean summit

By Alcuin Papa

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE (PNP) is seeking the assistance of other countries in securing the summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to be held in Cebu City in December .

PNP Director General Oscar Calderon said Friday he had appealed to countries participating in the 10-nation conference to contribute resources to shore up the security for the summit.

Aside from the Philippines, Asean includes Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (Myanmar), Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

Calderon said the PNP sought the help of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States as well as Interpol (International Police).

"Actually, we are asking the participation of our counterparts from the US, Australia, the British Embassy (sic) even the Interpol (International Police). They are willing to provide us police assistance on intelligence and on other antiterrorism activities," Calderon said.

"Our security forces in Camp Crame and Cebu are getting training in VIP security and antiterrorism operations. But we need help in logistics and other preparations," he said.

He assured the public the PNP will be ready for the summit.

"We can say we are more prepared this time because we have the volunteer participation of our foreign counterparts. They are willing to support us with the training. But logistically we are prepared and our preparations are on time," Calderon said.

He also said the UK had extended its assistance in the training of security forces, which is already in its second phase.

According to British Embassy, the PNP is being trained in crisis management through the RP-UK Crisis Management Program (CMAP). The second phase started on Oct. 5 and will run for an additional 18 months.

The program is funded by the Global Opportunities Fund of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, October 9, 2006
27th Week in Ordinary Time

Denis & Companions / John Leonardi
1st Reading: Gal 1:6-12
Gospel: Luke 10:25-37

A teacher of the Law came and began putting Jesus to the test. And he said, "Master, what shall I do to receive eternal life?" Jesus replied, "What is written in the Scripture? How do you understand it?" The man answered, "It is written: You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind. And you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus replied, "What a good answer! Do this and you shall live." The man wanted to keep up appearances, so he replied, "Who is my neighbor?"

Jesus then said, "There was a man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him and went off leaving him half-dead.

It happened that a priest was going along that road and saw the man, but passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite saw the man and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, too, was going that way, and when he came upon the man, he was moved with compassion. He went over to him and treated his wounds with oil and wine and wrapped them with bandages. Then he put him on his own mount and brought him to an inn where he took care of him.

The next day he had to set off, but he gave two silver coins to the innkeeper and told him: 'Take care of him and whatever you spend on him, I will repay when I come back.'"

Jesus then asked, "Which of these three, do you think, made himself neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The teacher of the Law answered, "The one who had mercy on him." And Jesus said, "Go then and do the same."

Commentary

Paul is dismayed at how quickly his baptized turn away from the Scriptures and try out a new version, ignoring what the servant of God taught them. The Scriptures are the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, not to be treated as we would any other teaching. It is to be taken to heart, obeyed, and we are to put ourselves in the position of being transformed by it. This is Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan—no such thing (like saying there is a Good Terrorist today). It seeks to tell us that those we reject as human beings can teach us truly about God! If our interpretation of Scripture does not make us compassionate and filled with pity for our enemies, then it is not the Word of God, and it brings us no life here or ever.

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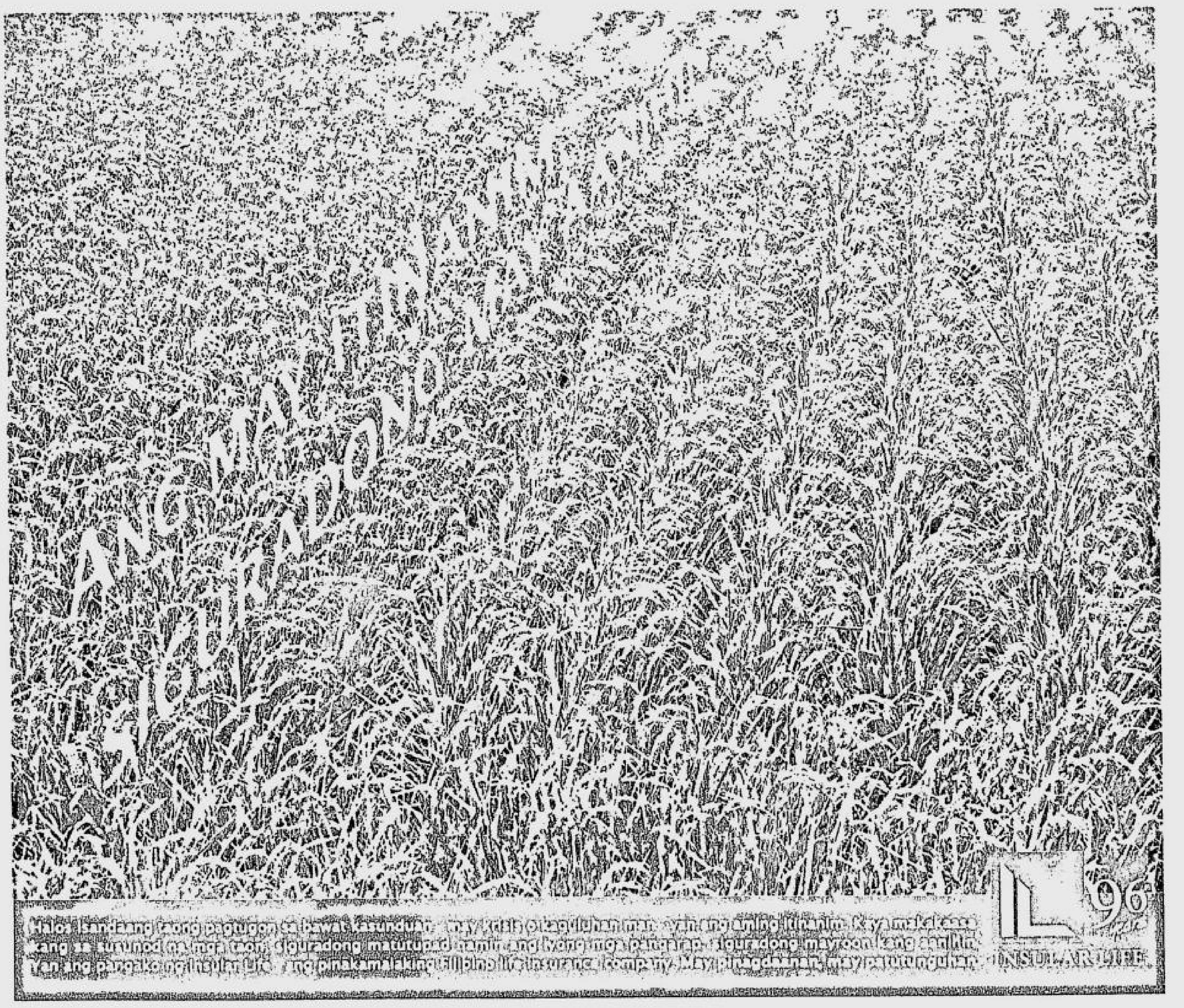

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Police eyeing politician in Mindanao exec's killing

COTABATO CITY—POLICE HERE SAID THEY were looking into the possible involvement of an influential politician in the Oct. 4 killing of lawyer Arnel Datukon, the social fund manager of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

"We have the names of the hired killers. They were hired by an influential politician," said police spokesperson Senior Insp. Samson Obatay, adding that a task force had been formed to speed up the investigation.

Datukon and his driver, Michael Mohammad, were on their way to work when they were ambushed by two motorcycle-riding gunmen. Datukon, 43, died instantly. Mohammad was brought to a hospital where he later died.

"A relative of the politician wanted to get Datukon's position. That's our lead," said Obatay.

Mayor Muslimin Sema urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to direct the National Bureau of Investigation to join the probe even as Supt. Peraco Macacua, Cotabato city police chief, said they were already coordinating with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in the ARMM and Task Group Cotabato in their investigation.

The separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front said it would help in the investigation and in tracking down the killers if asked to do so by the proper authorities.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said Datukon's murder was "heartless" and "disrespectful of the Muslim fasting month."

Maguindanao Vice Gov. Bimbo Sinsuat, a cousin of Datukon, said relatives and friends regarded him as a martyr since he was killed during the Muslim fasting season of Ramadan and never broke his fast until his last breath.

Islam considers the killing of a Muslim during Ramadan a martyrdom, according to Monara Pinggiaman, another relative of Datukon.

ARMM Gov. Zaldy Uy Ampatuan said he had yet to find someone with Datukon's qualifications to replace him. *Nash B. Maulana, Charlie Señase, Jeoffrey Maitem and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

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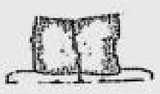

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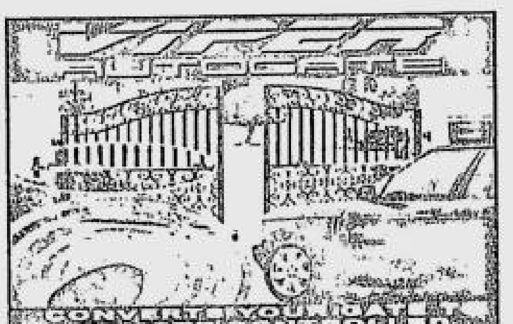

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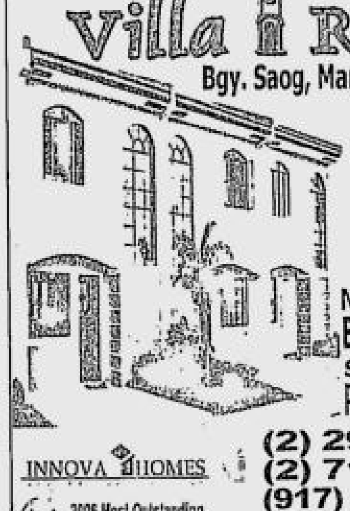

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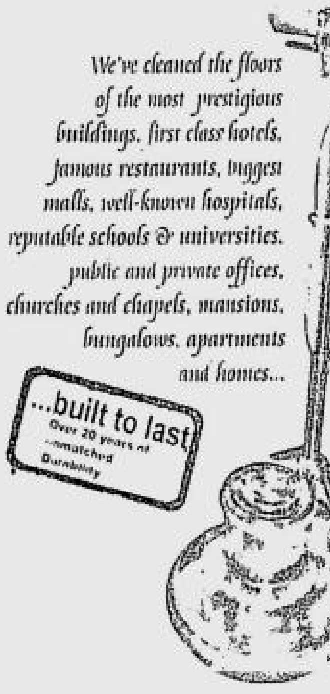

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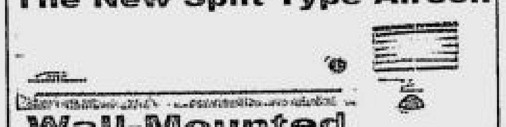

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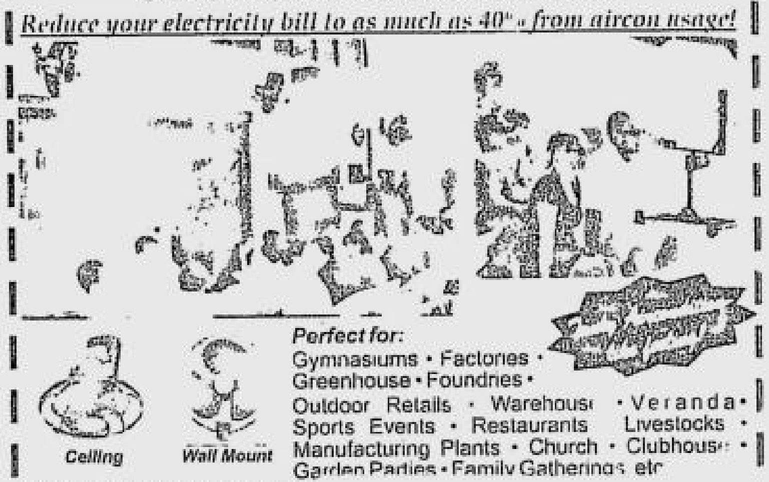

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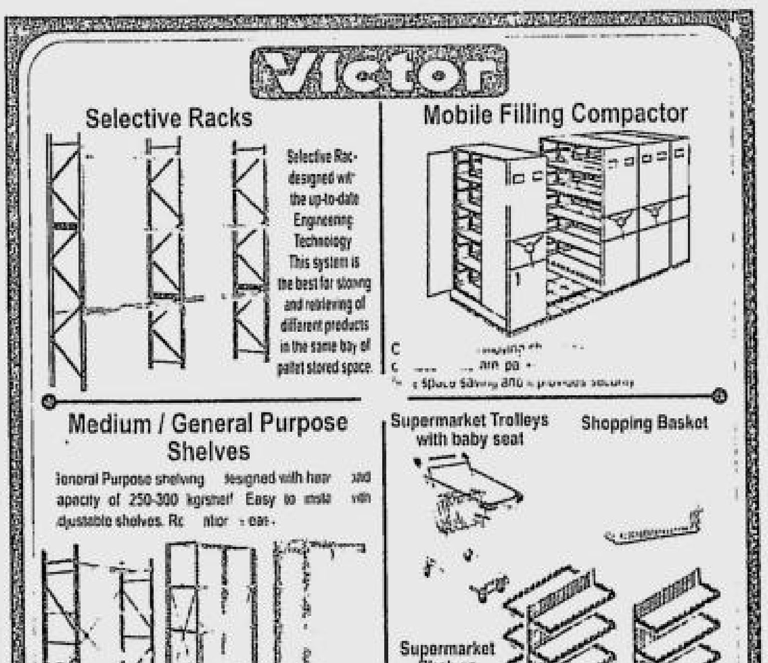

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Aussie MPs see Pinoy youth as hope of RP

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE GREATEST ASSET OF THE Philippines is its people and in particular, its youth, according to Australian parliamentarians who visited several of the country's key cities in July and August this year.

"In its young people, the Philippines has a committed group of activists who are building a better and stronger society," said the report by the Australian Political Exchange Council (APEC) it recently submitted to the Australian Parliament.

The group noted that the Filipino youth "seem to have great confidence and a level of maturity beyond their years."

The delegates, who met with legislators and officials from all levels of government, observed that young people who had been elected councilors, congressmen, or were working in the bureaucracy "are all inspiring. [They have] great hopes for the future and contribute to the positive development of their country... It is a tribute to all Filipinos that young people have been allowed to play such a pivotal role in public life and contribute to nation building."

Young and confident

The report was penned by delegation leader Bernie Ripoll, MP (member of parliament) Federal Member for Oxley.

The delegation was made up of a bipartisan group of representatives from the Australian Labor Party, Liberal Party of Australia, National Party and Apec.

The Philippine Council of Young Political Leaders (PCYPL) founded by Sen. Francis Pangilinan, Representatives Edgardo Chatto and Del de Guzman and Australian Ambassador to the Philippines Tony Hely served as hosts.

They showed the delegates around Manila, Tagaytay, Bohol and Cebu.

Regarding political activists in the Philippines, the report described them as "young, confident, intelligent, progressive and are spearheading new ideas and values that are vital to the future success of the Philippine economy."

Political killings

The group, however, expressed alarm over the extrajudicial killings: "Reports of political and media killings along with corruption and accusations of rigged elections do not bode well for national stability and the rule of law."

The report stated in unequivocal terms that human rights were the responsibility of all nations. "The Philippines still struggle with some ongoing problems in these areas. The inability for people, in particular, journalists and political operatives, to speak freely without fear of retribution or persecution limits the nation as a whole."

On the presidential election scheduled for 2010 and midterm elections in 2007, they observed that the country appeared to be in the early stages of national political campaigns.

"The Filipino people are very much involved in political activity and take an active interest in their elections. By all accounts it appears that the 2010 elections will be an exciting time with change and reform on top of everyone's agenda," the report said. "Of particular interest will be who replaces President Gloria Arroyo and what vision the new President will have for the Philippines."

Great debate

The Australian parliamentarians appeared to have joined the "great debate" on Charter change.

They said many Filipinos supported the change toward a parliamentary system. The country "is geared towards reforming the lack of strategic direction and the united front that maintains a system in desperate need to move out of the Spanish/US/Marcos era and into its own era."

"They were given th impression that many Filipinos supported the change to the parliamentary system as they felt that the current system could not adequately deal with issues such as corruption, nepotism and addressing a lack of modernizing reform," the report said.

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UP Mindanao studes buck proposal to hike tuition

By Jeffrey M. Tupas
Inquirer Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—OUTRAGED by the proposal to hike tuition and other fees at the premier state university, some 200 University of the Philippines in Mindanao (UPMin) students staged a protest vigil at the administration building, in Mintal, Tugbok District, here last Friday night.

"We appeal to the members of the UP Board of Regents to conduct [a] student consultation and not merely resort to information dissemination. There has to be genuine student consultation," said Raymond Basilio, chair of the university Student Council.

The UP administration had earlier said it would propose a tuition increase that could go as high as P1,500 per unit when the Board of Regents meets in Manila on Oct. 26.

Currently, tuition at UPMin is P200 per unit, which its administration said was not enough.

Basilio said that UP, being a state university, should provide Filipino youth access to quality and affordable education.

"But with the increase in tuition and other fees, the UP system is taking the path of commercialized education that competes with top expensive private colleges and universities," he said.

UPMin's administration said the increase was necessary so the school could deliver on its mission to provide quality education.

Dr. Emerlinda Roman, UP president, had said the government subsidy was not enough.

Roman created in February last year the De Dios Committee, whose task it was to study the current tuition and the socialized tuition and financial assistance program (STFAP) at UP.

The De Dios Committee did not only recommend a tuition increase but introduced the bracket system.

Bracket E is the millionaires' group. Students whose parents make more than P1 million per year would be in this bracket.

Under the proposal, bracket E students would pay about P1,500 per unit, or an increase of about 150 percent.

"This would mean that those falling under bracket E will shoulder the education of those under them – the bracket A students. This would only mean that the government is abandoning its responsibility to provide education to the Filipinos when education is supposed to be a basic right," Basilio said.

Bracket A students are those whose parents' gross annual income is less than P40,000. But only about 10 percent of UP students all over the country will be STFAP scholars.

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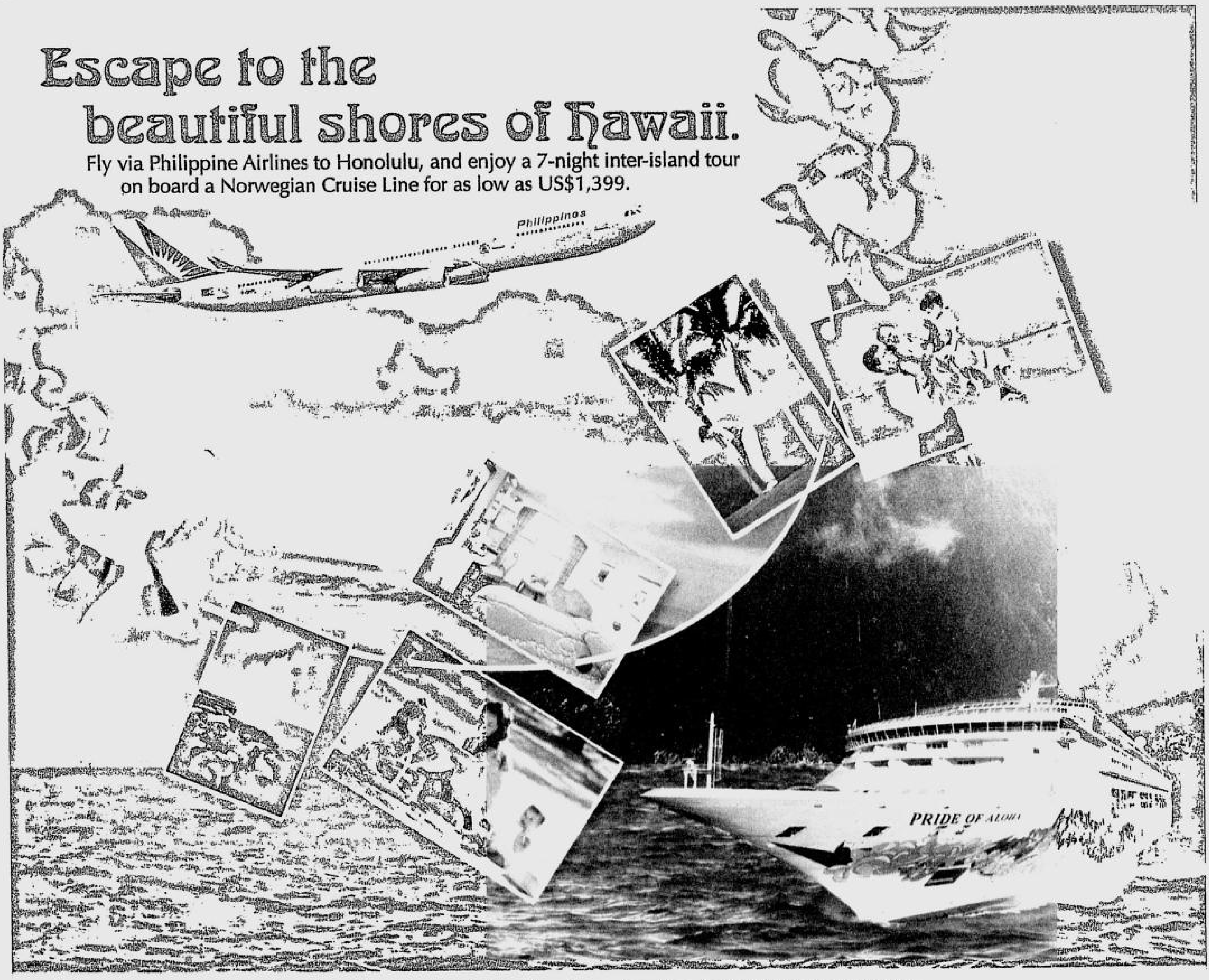

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DOJ defends filing of raps vs smuggling whistle-blower

By Armand N. Nocum

LACK OF EVIDENCE PROMPTED THE Department of Justice to drop the smuggling complaint against the owner of an oil importing company, even as it recommended that falsification charges be filed against the whistle-blower himself, a state prosecutor said yesterday.

DOJ Prosecutor Jaime Umpa, who handled the case, also denied claims by whistle-blower Norman Galera that he was made to suffer the same fate as Landbank executive Acsa Ramirez, who was wrongly linked to an alleged anomaly in the bank which she herself had exposed.

"Ramirez was not found to have falsified documents. She was not part of the crime. In Galera's case, he was found to be a major player in falsifying the documents he presented to the the government when he came out with the smuggling story," Umpa told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

Galera, president of the brokerage firm Trail Blazers Integrated Corp., had earlier scored the DOJ for charging him with falsifying public documents when he was the one who blew the whistle on the alleged smuggling of P315,000,000 worth of oil from 2003 to 2004 by Oilink International Corp.

In his motion for reconsideration before the DOJ, Galera lamented that instead of being rewarded for exposing the alleged smuggling, he was being "persecuted and prosecuted" for his deed.

But Umpa said he was only following the dictates of the law when he decided against charging Oilink owner Paul Co and Galera's colleagues at Trail Blazers Rolando Valeriano and Noel Aro with smuggling and tax evasion for lack of evidence.

"The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group did not present evidence to back up its case of smuggling and tax evasion against Co, Valeriano and Aro. Without evidence, it is hard to pin them down," Umpa said.

Unlike Co, Valeriano and Aro, he said Galera himself had admitted that the signatures on the inward foreign manifests had been falsified and altered and the CIDG later established that Galera was the "author," Umpa said.

Thus, Umpa said, there was probable cause to pin Galera for alleged falsification of public documents.

What became of RSBS cases – Baterina

By Michael Lim Ubac

A CONGRESSIONAL LEADER YESTERDAY sought an inventory of all the graft cases involving the Armed Forces of the Philippines Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS) in light of reports that not one of the 91 cases filed against former top RSBS officials has been resolved.

Rep. Salacnib Baterina of Ilocos Sur, vice chair of the House committee on justice, called on the Department of Justice and the Ombudsman to immediately undertake the inventory "in the interest of justice."

Baterina prodded state prosecutors not to let the RSBS cases gather dust in the Sandiganbayan, or any other court, because "billions of pesos in retirement benefits collected from soldiers are at stake here."

Now that the RSBS has been declared bankrupt and will soon be closed, the government must not let the people responsible for the anomalies go scot-free, the lawmaker said.

Baterina said it would be a "great injustice" to the soldiers if those who misused the RSBS' funds went unpunished.

He cited AFP public information officer Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro's statement that, based on documents, the 91 RSBS graft cases remained pending in the Sandiganbayan.

The mismanagement of RSBS, which was created in 1973 as a pension fund for soldiers, had prompted the Ombudsman and the Senate to recommend the filing of graft charges against several retired generals, among others, for the approval of an anomalous P277-million loan to Marilaque Land Inc.

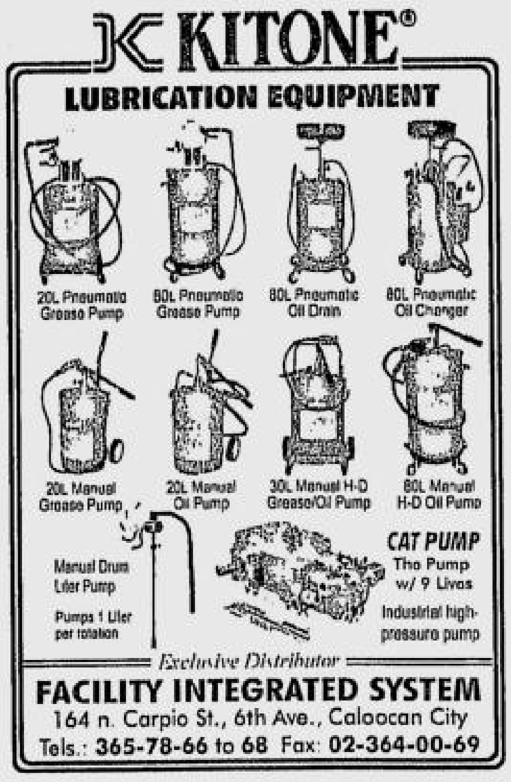
"The RSBS funds were collected and pooled out of our soldiers' sweat and blood. It's time our government prosecutors go after ex-military officials who treated the RSBS as a milking cow," Baterina said.

He assured members of the AFP that the House was one with them in pushing for the prosecution of the RSBS looters.

"This issue should not cause them any worry because the AFP leadership had already assured AFP members that they will get their retirement pay despite the RSBS closure. What we must do now is to go after and punish the guilty and ensure that this does not happen again."

Congress should participate in studying the possibility of establishing another retirement fund for soldiers, according to Rep. Rodito Albano III of Isabela, former vice chair of the House committee on rules.

"In this manner, we could put in sound measures to prevent another fund hemorrhage and we can exercise our congressional oversight powers to monitor this. The RSBS experience should never be repeated," he said.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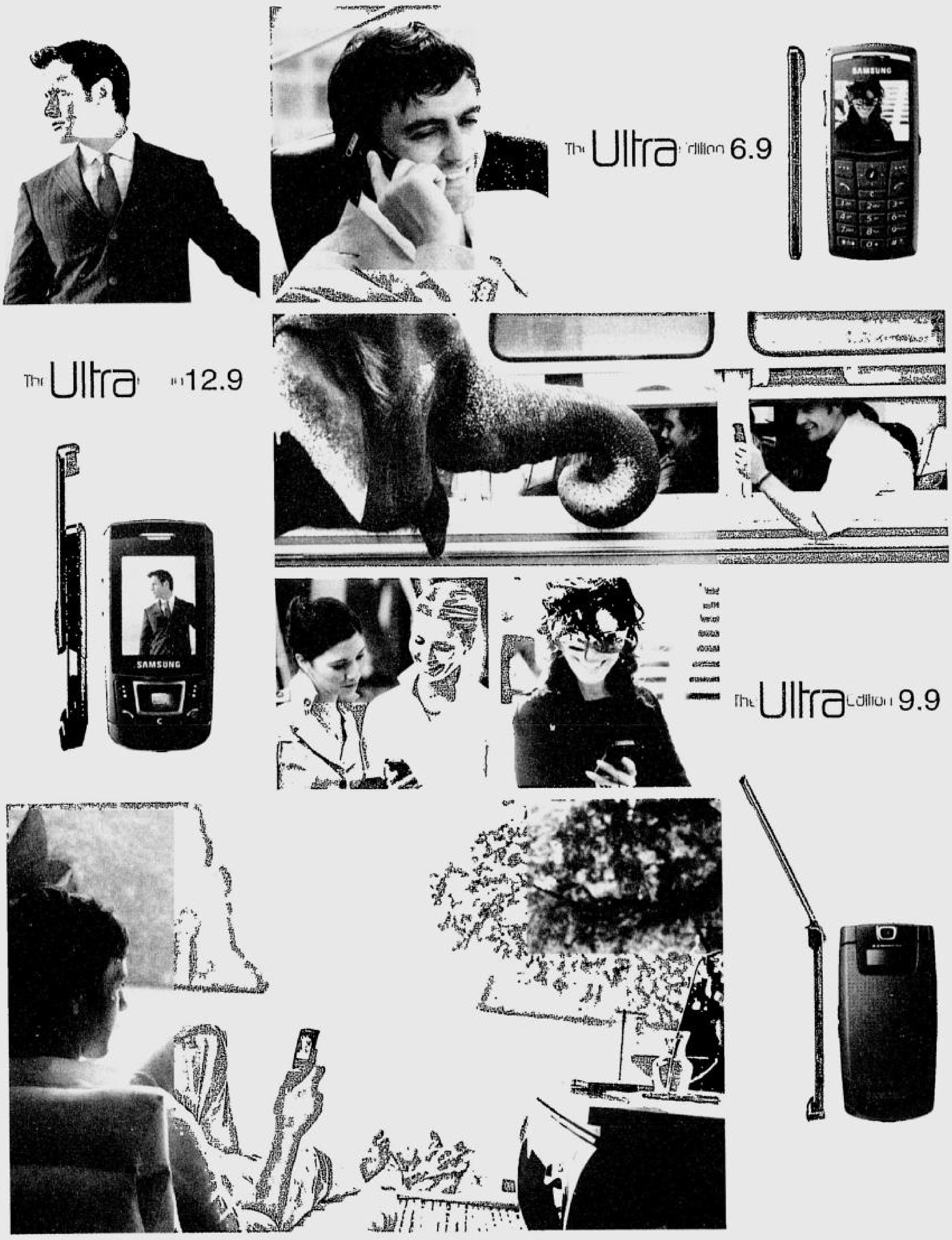

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Alienation

EDITORIAL

OR HOW TO IRRITATE THE MAXIMUM NUMBER of citizens without really achieving anything. First, don't do anything. Then, do something. Finally, decide not to do what was going to be done, on the pretext that more groundwork remains. This, in a nutshell, is what happened in the case of nursing graduates hounded by a scandal concerning their board examinations.

To be sure, the controversy is highly emotional and is a black eye for the profession. It has been marked less with zeal in identifying and punishing the culprits—those who leaked questions and benefited from the leaks—and more with stubbornness, even brazenness, on all sides. An embattled professional regulatory community at one point tried to force through the swearing-in of nurses, ending up in a case filed before the courts; nursing graduates have been shrill and inflexible through their refusal to even consider retaking the contested portion of the exams.

When the possibility of the scandal spilling over to affect the reputation of all Filipino nurses overseas emerged, it compounded the misery of some graduates who have come to experience suspicion and even hostility on the part of patients here at home.

This is when the President stepped in—only to face hostility from the graduates themselves. Ironically, some of the arguments put forward by graduates—why force a retake, when everyone, including the President, cheats anyway; and why zero in on this class when it's not the first to have a few cheaters or to take exams marred by cheating—aren't exactly relevant to the issue at hand, but painful and wounding to the government nonetheless. Not least because the same arguments have been used by the administration and its supporters to defend itself in the past.

The Palace, after insisting that a partial retake must take place, and offering assistance to provincial students in terms of transportation to Manila, was then confronted with an issue it should have identified from the start—the pending case in court, which precludes any action until the case is resolved.

The result? Stepping back, supposedly out of a belated realization that the court has to be allowed to do its work, and with the face-saving argument that the National Bureau of Investigation should submit its own report, first. We are reminded of Ferdinand Marcos' favorite means of nagging his underlings—insisting on "complete staff work." Not only that, but also a more methodical approach to problems.

There was a leak, and it was exposed, so there should be consequences. Officials should have been dismissed on the spot. Then there should have been a determination of the extent of the leak, who benefited, and therefore, who should have been barred from enjoying the fruits of their fraud. Then there should have been a sober analysis of whether a retake of a portion, or all, of the nursing board exams was required, taking into account the need to have a credible certification process for nurses. The hard-headed behavior of some graduates might have been either unnecessary because unprovoked, or proven to be brat-like behavior easily ignored.

As it is, the ferociousness of some nursing graduates may embolden more, and understandably so, as they can argue that they've become a political football or, at the very least, victims of inept governance. All eyes will be on the Court of Appeals—which doesn't mean the case can't be elevated in turn to the Supreme Court, which means it could drag out further, thus keeping an entire class in a kind of professional limbo.

The President of course has command responsibility for all this, but for the most part, bumbling as it has been, her response has been the right one: to somehow ensure permanent damage to the reputation of Filipino nursing isn't done. She has been badly served by her people, though. When the executive secretary is reduced to making the following plea—"To say it in a few words, the President is not insensitive to what [she had] heard and read when the issue [arose]. And therefore, she directed the [labor department] to review the EO [that Brion] himself submitted in light of all the feedback we got"—government has already lost the battle in terms of public trust.

This is not the first case of presidential flip-flopping. It must be asked (as in the case of Jovito Palparan's appointment, then non-appointment), if factional infighting within her Cabinet is beyond her control, and results in her not fully being in charge of her team.

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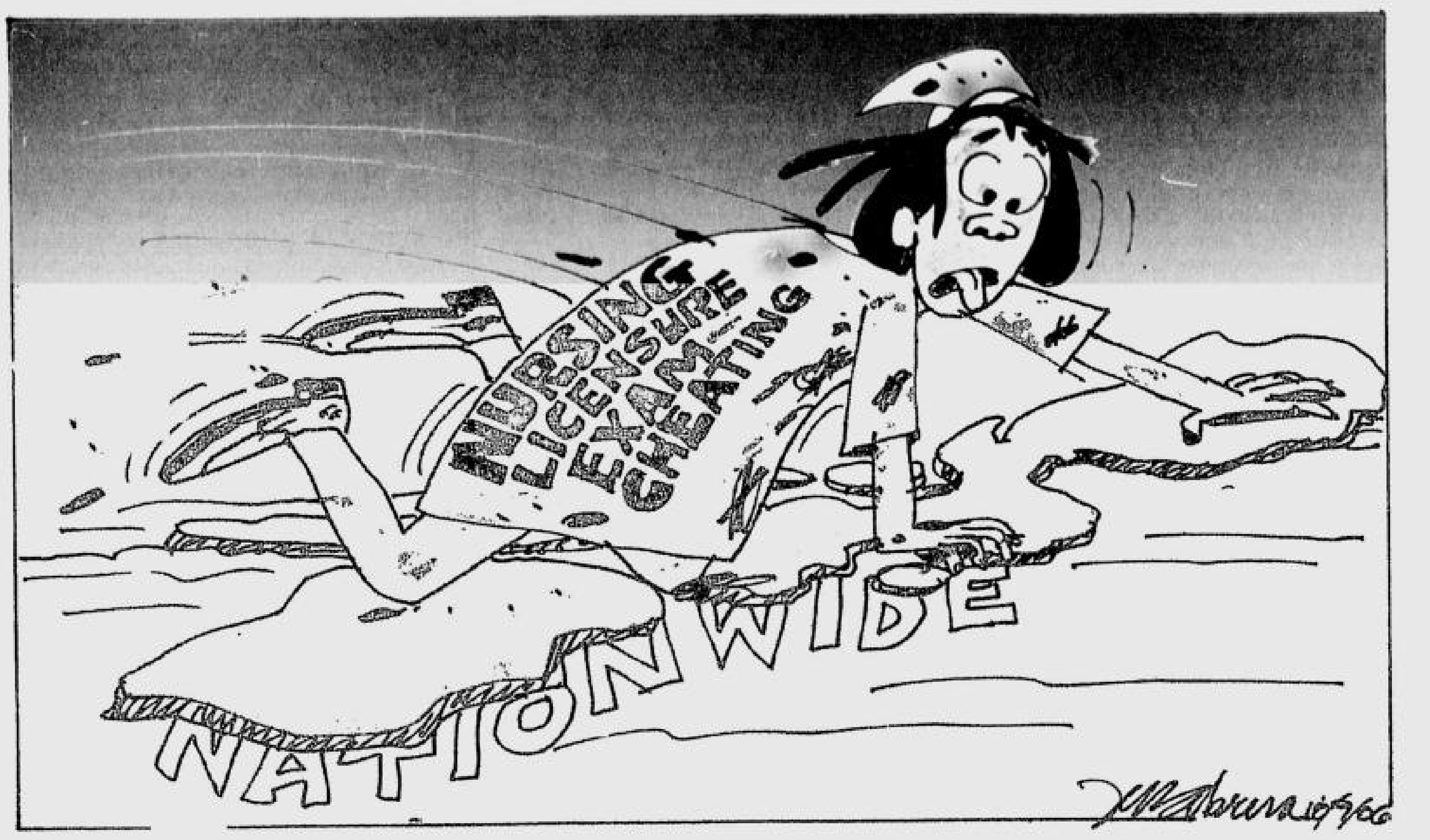


Let Nicole's lawyers present rebuttal witnesses

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I THINK THE STATE PROSECUTORS IN THE Subic rape case are courting the suspicions and the ire of the public for deciding not to present rebuttal witnesses—despite the wishes of the victim, Nicole and the protest of one of the prosecutors, Hazel Valdez.

Ditto for Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez for taking the side of Senior State Prosecutor Emilie Fe de los Santos and the three other state prosecutors. They will be accused of a sellout if the American GIs are acquitted. President Macapagal-Arroyo will not escape the fallout, either. An acquittal will give credence to the claim of Nicole and her mother that the Subic rape case is being sacrificed in exchange for Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante who, if he chooses to sing like a canary on the P728-million fertilizer scam, will open several cans of worms.

Ditto for Judge Benjamin Pozon of the Makati Regional Trial Court. If I were him, I would allow Valdez and Nicole's private lawyer, Evalyn Ursua, to present their rebuttal witnesses, "in the interest of justice."

"In the interest of justice." How so often we hear the phrase from lawyers when they present evidence or witnesses that the other side thinks are unnecessary or already disallowed by the rules of court. Almost always, the judge allows their presentation so that he cannot be accused of partiality or, worse, of suppressing evidence. Justice, after all, is the raison d'être for the courts and the judges. And both sides—prosecution and defense—should be given all the opportunity to present their evidence.

Surprisingly, Justice Secretary Gonzalez doesn't believe in giving the prosecution all the opportunity. He defended the state prosecutors—already under suspicion of conniving with the defense—when they rested their case without presenting the scheduled rebuttal witnesses, thus making the Subic rape case look like a "*lutong* Macao."

"You know," Gonzalez said, "a rebuttal witness can work for or against them. The presentation of a rebuttal testimony can go either way because you are not sure what, for example, the defense has on a witness.

"That was the reason," he continued, "they (prosecutors) ... decided to not anymore disturb the findings because it might actually do more harm than good. They thought it's OK already ..."

But what if it's not OK? What if the accused are acquitted? "The State sold out the case, Filipino womanhood was sacrificed in exchange for Joc-joc," the public will say.

"For whatever it's worth." That is another expression we often hear during trials. It means that a piece of evidence that the other side thinks is worthless can stand or fall on its own. And judges usually also allow its presentation. The more the evidence, the better to assess justice.

So better safe than sorry; better above suspicion than be suspected. If I were Gonzalez, I would allow Valdez and Ursua to present their rebuttal witnesses, for whatever they are worth—that is, after directing De los Santos to withdraw the panel's manifestation informing the court that it had dispensed with the planned rebuttal. De los Santos should forget her hurts and remember that she is a prosecutor whose duty is to have the guilty convicted. She should withdraw the manifestation, and Judge Pozon should allow it. Never mind the technicalities. The important thing is to show the public that justice is being dispensed without fear or favor. Otherwise, should the accused be acquitted, they run the risk of being lynched.

On the other hand, if the GIs walk free despite the testimony of the rebuttal witnesses, Gonzalez et al. can always say: "We told you so. We did what they wanted us to do. It's their fault."

* * *

A friend called me to ask whether Kris Aquino, Manny Pacquiao, Sen. Juan Flavier and TV newscaster Mike Enriquez have apologized to the victims of the felled billboards. Kris and the Pacman have the most number of billboards on Edsa. I don't know if they have said "So sorry," or if they even care at all.

* * *

The same friend said that driving on Edsa, without the billboards, gives him a feeling of freedom. He now feels he could breathe—unlike before, when Edsa was hemmed in by billboards. He felt claustrophobic then, he said. Many other people have used the same word, "claustrophobic," in describing a trip down Edsa.

* * *

Curiously, there is a win-win solution to the billboard controversy. Billboards can be totally removed from Edsa (including that dangerous monstrosity in Guadalupe, thanks to the greed of the priests there), but the outdoor advertisers can still have spaces for their billboards, which can be used to hide dilapidated and decaying buildings and houses. Chair Bayani Fernando of the Metro Manila Development Authority wants to use them to hide the squatter shanties. Thus, the billboards can be put to such good use, not just for making money for the advertising agencies and their clients.

That means the sky will be visible again from Edsa; and Avenida Rizal will be the site of the new billboard jungle. Many parts of Quezon City, which has the most number of squatter colonies, will also be billboard havens. Imagine, we solve the blight of urban decay and squatter colonies by hiding them with big billboards featuring beautiful, half-naked bodies, while generating plenty of money for commerce.

* * *

Contrary to what you expected, the happiest people after Typhoon Milenyo are the squatters. Many of their shanties are now roofed with newer GI sheets and tarpaulins printed with colored photos. Passengers of any plane flying low over them will think they are looking at a new billboard jungle. What's more, the squatters now have plenty of firewood—from the many trees downed by the typhoon. That's probably why the cost of LPG is going down.

Misadventures in idioms

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WE HAD A HILARIOUS INCIDENT IN THE HOtel where we were staying in Honolulu last week. "We" included a group of Filipinos who wrote for Filipino publications in the United States and me. My friends had rooms on the fourth floor while I had mine on the 19th. As it turned out, higher was better. The water at least flowed better, the pipes on the lower floors being intermittently clogged and producing not very pleasant effects on the toilets.

After repeated and increasingly strident pleas to the hotel manager for help, they finally got a plumber who, not surprisingly, turned out to be a Filipino. The hotel was full of them, from front desk clerks to cleaning persons. Tagalog and Ilocano words wafted in the lobby and corridors like wisps of cigarette smoke.

The Filipino plumber was in his 40s, and unlike most Filipinos there who were cheerful and eager to please, he was cross. My friends figured he was having a bad day. He banged and emitted low-register grumbling noises while he dredged up the toilet bowl as if to show he didn't have an easy job but was doing it manfully. When he was almost done, one of my friends, Marlon, struck up a conversation with him—in English. He told him that they were transferring to the topmost floor anyway, but that it was good he was fixing things for the next occupant. He joked that he would be leaving him to the tender mercies of the room's next "victim."

The comment sent the plumber through the roof. He replied angrily that the hotel was not in the habit of victimizing customers. Certainly he did not take his duties lightly, the state of the hotel's plumbing could not be held to reflect on him. Marlon's roommates came to his rescue, telling the plumber with much amusement that Marlon was just teasing him.

Marlon himself tried to placate him. He told him he was glad that he showed exceptional loyalty to his place of employment, which reflected well on Filipinos. "I know," he said, "where you're coming from."

Instead of appeasing him, Marlon stoked the fires of his fury. The plumber became livid and turned on him wrathfully. Of course, he said, Marlon knew from his accent where he was coming from. He was coming from the Ilocos, and demanded to know why Marlon insisted on insulting his race.

There was no getting him out of it, his mind had locked on to the idea. My friends thought restraint was the better part of valor, and simply let loose an explosion of mirth as soon as he left the room. They laughed their insides out. Till the day I left, we were using the phrase on one another during conversations like a running gag. Each time somebody expressed an opinion about things, we'd say: "I know where you're coming from."

My friends "were coming from" various parts of the United States.

I told them I knew of a similar incident that happened to a friend of mine. This wasn't apocryphal, I said, it really happened.

It was during martial law, and my friend, a journalist, was with an international church-based fact-finding team to investigate the massacre of some villagers in a far-flung area. I forget now which part in Mindanao it was. After visiting the site where the killings took place—the military claimed it was a battle with insurgents; the witnesses, who refused to be named, said it was a summary execution of suspects—my friend's group hurried off to a nearby camp to dig up more details about the incident. That was risky business then, the provincial commander being lord and master of the countryside, who could summon even the mayor and governor like vassals. During the twilight years of martial law in particular, when this happened, the combat-fatigued and half-crazed officers were the last people you wanted to fraternize with, or posed unpleasant questions to.

My friend's group was led to a room where they were told to wait for someone who would brief them. A stern-looking young captain came in and said the provincial commander was out, and he was there instead to answer questions. Asked to give the military side, he stuck to the story about an encounter between their men and the local insurgents. When my friend's group said the wounds of the victims did not seem consistent with an encounter, the captain raised his voice and he said that as far as he was concerned the troops were telling the truth.

My friend asked who led the patrol. The captain answered that he was not in a position to answer that. My friend asked how many soldiers and rebels took part in the firefight. The captain answered that he was not in a position to answer that. My friend asked what he thought of the witnesses' story that the victims had been rounded up from their houses and dragged away into the fields, from where they later heard shots. The captain answered that he was not in a position to answer that.

In exasperation, my friend said with a tinge of sarcasm: "Well, who is in a position to answer that? Who calls the shots here?"

The captain suddenly grew livid and turned on my friend. "Shots?" he asked angrily, "I didn't hear any shots. We don't shoot people here."

It took some time before they could calm the captain down. But my friend's comment ended the meeting right there and then. Fortunately, no one in my friend's group remarked that the captain was fit to be tied.

What can I say? In this country, be more careful of your idioms than your insults. You could find yourself in very deep s—t. But that's one idiom you really don't want to take literally.

* * *

Tomorrow, the "Stop the Killings" bar tour moves to My Brother's Mustache, Scout Tuason cor. Scout Madriñan, Quezon City. Noel Cabangon, Chikoy Pura, Isha and Susan Fernandez will be playing. Neither hell nor high water, typhoons nor brownouts, will stop the "Stop the Killings."

Judge for yourselves

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

LET ME START WITH SNIPPETS FROM THE decision of the Supreme Court on the Mega Pacific automation contract with the Commission on Elections. Some paragraphs of the main opinion written by Justice Artemio Panganiban set the tone:

"There is grave abuse of discretion (1) when an act is done contrary to the Constitution, the law or jurisprudence; or (2) when it is executed whimsically, capriciously or arbitrarily out of malice, ill will or personal bias. In the present case, the Commission on Elections approved the assailed Resolution and awarded the subject Contract not only in clear violation of law and jurisprudence, but also in reckless disregard of its own bidding rules and procedure.

"Comelec awarded this billion-peso undertaking with inexplicable haste, without adequately checking and observing mandatory financial, technical and legal requirements. It also accepted the proferred computer hardware and software even if, at the time of the award, they had undeniably failed to pass eight critical requirements designed to safeguard the integrity of elections, especially the following three items ....

"Because of the foregoing violations of law and the glaring grave abuse of discretion committed by Comelec, the Court has no choice but to exercise its solemn 'constitutional duty' to void the assailed Resolution and the subject Contract. The illegal, imprudent and hasty actions of the Commission have not only desecrated legal and jurisprudential norms, but have also cast serious doubts upon the poll body's ability and capacity to conduct automated elections. Truly, the pith and soul of democracy—credible, orderly, and peaceful elections—has been put in jeopardy by the illegal and gravely abusive acts of Comelec.

"At any rate, it is clear that Comelec gravely abused its discretion in arbitrarily failing to observe its own rules, policies and guidelines with respect to the bidding process, thereby negating a fair, honest and competitive bidding.

"In brief, despite the absence of competent proof as to the existence and eligibility of the alleged consortium (MPC), its capacity to deliver on the Contract, and the members' joint and several liability therefor, Comelec nevertheless assumed that such consortium existed and was eligible. It then went ahead and considered the bid of MPC, to which the Contract was eventually awarded, in gross violation of the former's own bidding rules and procedures contained in its RFP. Therein lies Comelec's grave abuse of discretion."

But the Court did not speak with one voice.

Justice Hilario Davide:

"Finally, there is no suggestion that graft and corruption attended the bidding process, or that the contract price is excessive or unreasonable. All that the petitioners claim is that 'the bidding and the award process was fatally flawed. The public respondents acted without or in excess of its jurisdiction or with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction when it [sic] awarded the project. It may be precipitate for this Court to declare void the contract in question."

Justice Jose Vitug:

"The electoral process, it is true, should be of paramount and immediate concern to every Filipino. It is also probably true that the computerization/automation of our electoral process, as well as the progress that it brings, is just as important. Nevertheless, it could also be unwise for the Court, for that sake alone, to precipitately take on the case; after all, we have been without it for decades. The opinions expressed by my colleagues, collectively and individually, should indeed give compelling reasons for the Commission on Elections to perhaps take notice and, on its own, to forthwith reexamine the assailed bidding process."

Justice Dante Tinga, joined by Justices Adolfo Azcuna and Renato Corona:

"In deciding the instant case, the Court shall consider only the undisputed or admitted facts and resolve only the specific questions raised by the parties. The Court is not a repository of remedies or a 'super-legal-aid bureau.' We cannot grant relief for every perceived violation of the law or, worse, on the basis of prophetic wisdom. Paraphrasing an old decision, Mr. Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote: 'Judicial power, however large, has an orbit more or less strictly defined by well-recognized presuppositions regarding the kind of business that properly belongs to courts. Their business is adjudication, not speculation. They are concerned with actual, living controversies, and not abstract disputation.'"

Briefly, the decision was 10 to 5. The main thrust of the dissents was that the verification of criminal facts should first be left to somebody else. Under the law, it was the responsibility of the Ombudsman.

What did the Ombudsman find?

"Finally, it should be made clear that the conclusions herein arrived at do not in any way run counter to the findings and ruling of the Supreme Court in the Infotech case. In the first place, that case is a civil suit requiring only a preponderance of evidence. On the other hand, the finding of probable cause in a criminal case entails, as well, the determination of sufficient evidence to support a judgment of conviction if one will be filed. The mere claim that grave abuse was committed, standing alone, is not sufficient to warrant a finding of probable cause. . . .

"WHEREFORE, this Office recommends the following:

2. That the criminal complaints against public and private respondents be DISMISSED for lack of probable cause."

It does boggle the mind; but you be the judge. And it might be enlightening to compare the evidence used for the suspension of oppositionist mayors.

'Komedya'

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

DESPITE THE GLOOM AND THE MISERY OF life under the government of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, one cannot help but notice something wonderful—this one made possible, as always, by those whom the Muses have blessed.

On television, we have such programs as GMA-7's "100% Pinoy" and ABS-CBN's "Noypi, Ikaw Ba Yan?"—although I have this thing about one's nationality being trivialized with a tongue-in-cheek nickname.

There is also Pia Hontiveros' very informative show on ANC, "Shop Talk," which features everyone from creative entrepreneurs with a social conscience, to musicians and artists.

And even in news programs like Channel 2's "Bandila" and GMA 7's magazine shows like "Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho," much deserved publicity is given to achievers in all fields. (No, I'm not concerned with whatever it is these two networks are quarreling about; I like them both. I watch what I like on their channels as much as I watch those on ABC-5, especially "Shall We Dance?" because that living doll, Lucy Torres-Gomez, is truly a refreshing sight for eyes made sore by images of GMA. And my days are not complete without listening to that living book, Ka Totoy Talastas, every morning on Net 25's "Liwanagin Natin.")

The irony doesn't escape you. They fit exactly the nature of the much-maligned "development journalism" that was twisted to mean government propaganda and "praise release" and, worse, "envelopmental journalism" even by some of its implementers. But it is really about being made aware of our identity, our past, our values, our capabilities, so that we may have a better understanding of our present, as a basis for charting our direction and our future as a nation.

With an administration that seems to be constantly running after its own tail while executing a bizarre ballet of one step forward, two steps backward, keeping to our lights is essential to keeping our collective sanity.

And last Saturday on "Walang Tulugan" of Kuya Germs, there was Soxy Topacio announcing the formation of Komedya Pilipina Foundation—something I thought nobody would ever come up with these days, when the theater of the absurd seems to be the thing.

The performers who came with him, Wowie de Guzman among them, did a dress rehearsal of a choreographed sword-fight (song and dance) sequence from their first production, "Perlita ng Silangan." It was so delightful to watch, it made staying up worthwhile. This came after a performance by that awesome couple, Isay Alvarez and Robert Seña, of an old Tagalog flirtation duet. Their marriage is truly made in heaven. But then, "Walang Tulugan" is where you get to watch such gems as the Wing Duo and Pilita Corrales doing a medley of old standards!

From what I have read about it, the *komedya* is comedy in the Shakespearean tradition. It makes us laugh at our own errors, unlike the very erroneous and divisive "moro-moro" that was part of the "divide-and-rule" policy of the Spanish *conquistadores*. It was so effective in promoting Muslim-Christian conflict such that more than a century after the Spaniards left our shores, Muslims and Christians still distrust each other.

Soxy explained that the conflict in the *komedya*, at least in this production, is not between Muslims and Christians, but the universal theme of good vs evil. And the characters are all Muslims, which in truth, we all were, once upon a time—even up to the time when the story of "Perlita" took place, which he said should be between the 15th and 16th centuries.

Even then, one of foundation's aims, he said, was to "contemporize" the *komedya*. I can just imagine how entertaining it would be to watch caricatures of the characters in our day and time, playing out their foibles, garbed in those beautifully designed silken robes, speaking in poetic albeit archaic-sounding Tagalog.

I wish they could bring the show to the provinces. And I wish the Komedya Pilipina Foundation will get all the support it needs from the private sector. There's no hope of any assistance from this government because it is so preoccupied producing its own black comedy.

This, after all, is a government that can call a unilateral ceasefire with the New People's Army the moment it hears Christmas carols, but ignores all calls from Muslims for a respite from the shelling, bombing and strafing during the holy month of Ramadan.

To kill or capture a handful of so-called terrorists, an entire populace is terrorized by low-flying helicopters whirring day and night over an island that is just about the size of the city of Manila.

In one of the "terrorist" camps it has reportedly captured, the military allegedly found a pamphlet that rationalized the raping of female hostages, according to certain passages in the Koran. The literature was written in English, supposedly authored by Khadafy Janjalani.

I wonder how many among the Abu Sayyaf have taken to reading literature in English? Or how many can actually read?

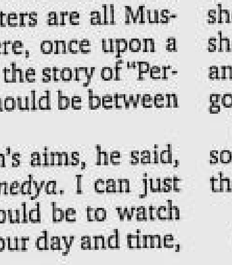
Then, there are the unforgettable images in the aftermath of super-typhoon Milenyo: GMA-7's Kara David drenched with rain, running here and there to save the babies of a squatter community in Tondo, while Ms Arroyo takes her grandchildren to the opening of a high-end toy store in Subic; and then Metro aides risk their lives in the middle of strong winds and flying GI sheets to clear the way for her convoy because she, on her mobile phone, trying to be as cute and helpless as ET, is asking whether she could go home *na*.

Which again brings up this recurrent bothersome, worrisome question: Who's really minding the store?

* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

Barangay inspectors



THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT IT'S LIKE TO VOTE? You look up your precinct number on a list; you find the table that represents your precinct; you give your name, show your ID. A helpful schoolteacher, in the company of other teachers, consults the list of voters and finds your name among the alphabetized many; a stack of thick papers is flipped through; and there you find your name, signature and thumbprint; you sign and provide thumbprints in their presence; in other words, you prove to all that you are who the records say you are—a voter.

You then get your ballot. You go to a desk with a folder—the "voting booth"—fill out your ballot, fold it, return to your precinct; your ballot goes into the ballot box, and its stub is slipped into a separate slot in the same box. You have done your democratic duty in anywhere from 10-30 minutes if you're lucky.

But more than the casting of ballot, it's the counting that matters.

It seems to me that in the case of the so-called "people's initiative," now being questioned by various groups (including OneVoice, to which I belong) before the Supreme Court, you just have to wonder to what extent the Commission on Elections was involved in it, and whether its involvement was what was supposed to happen. And so last Saturday, I found myself visiting a group of young law students from the Ateneo, accompanied by a couple of young lawyers. They were supervised by OneVoice's legal counsel, Carlos Medina Jr.; all had given up four days of their lives to the Herculean task of looking at masses of paperwork—to see if, indeed, the so-called "people's initiative" was kosher.

Imagine being given four days to inspect a warehouse crammed, floor to ceiling, with cans of sardines—the mission: to find rotten sardines—and you will get an idea of the task imposed on the groups opposing the initiative. Every set of, say, one to five crates is a province; every can is a barangay, every sardine, a voter. It isn't possible to scrutinize every can much less every sardine; but you can, upon conducting an initial survey of the premises (How many crates? How many cans per crate? How many sardines per can?) do a series of spot checks to see if there is something deserving further investigation. For example, if a crate is sitting in a pool of oil, some cans must be leaky and so there must be something wrong; or if a can has a bulge, something rotten must be inside it.

Lawyer Medina will be submitting a complete record of his group's findings to the Supreme Court. So let me state some things that left me puzzled and troubled. There are the obvious cases such as Davao, where the election officer said no signatures were verified in three districts—these will be reported to the Supreme Court in detail.

What bothers me is that looking at sheet after signature sheet for barangay after barangay in province after province, it's obvious that many sheets had been filled out with names and addresses, before people were asked or told where to sign. In some cases even the untrained eye can detect that as one person filled in names and addresses, another, single, person did the signing for more than one person. Then another went through the sheet to mark it in various ways (depending on the barangay) to indicate that some signatures were valid and others, invalid. Then everything was certified by a barangay official and two witnesses.

What the barangay official certified became the basis for issuance of a further certification by a Comelec official. But as the young volunteers have been able to thoroughly prove, there are instances where the Comelec certification doesn't necessarily reflect what the barangays reported. Take District 3 in Leyte where there are 91,214 registered voters. Supposedly, 18,761 signed and met the cut (their signatures were valid). Double-checking the attached documents showed that only 8,552 signatures were valid—this according to the barangay officials. Which means, the Comelec certification that 20.56 percent of that district endorsed the petition was erroneous; that stricter checks should have revised it down to 9 percent. Which, of course, meets the requirement of 3 percent for that district by a healthy margin.

All this, however, presumes those checking and certifying the signatures are authorized to do so—but when were barangay officials, partisan politicians every one of them, ever authorized to conduct a process reserved for the Comelec? So what is the meaning of that 9 percent, if those who did the initial certifying weren't from the Comelec, but were partisan barangay officials?

If, in one district, just a few days' scrutiny can reveal such massive inflation (of the reportedly verified signatures), and breathtaking errors in reporting and certifying (inflating the supposedly valid number by close to 100 percent), what more must be lurking in all the other districts?

But isn't everyone being too persnickety? One of the young lawyers gently explained why she'd volunteered her time and trouble: "Any change to the Constitution will affect every aspect of our lives—and so, we have to be strict."

Put another way: would you hand your ballot to a barangay official? No—which is why you do so to a school teacher. And since when did barangay officials have access to the records of voters, including their specimen signatures? Personally, if our barangay officials had been given access to those files, I would have had grave doubts about the integrity of the voters' lists and records, and even more serious suspicions about a future plebiscite.

You can go to my blog (www.quezon.ph) where I've posted photos of some of the interesting things I've seen.

Resources for results

(The following are excerpts from a presentation on Resource Mobilization given at the recently concluded Basic Education Forum organized by the League of Corporate Foundations and the Philippine Business for Education.)

COMMENTARY

Vicky Garchitorena

WHEN INTERESTING IDEAS ARE PROPOSED FOR IMPLEMENTATION, the discussion inevitably boils down to one question: what about the money? Always, dreaming has its price tag.

The resource mobilization framework for the 57-75 campaign—which aims to raise the National Achievement Test average from 57 percent to 75 percent in five years—is, however, not just about raising funds.

It is, more importantly, about the strategic placement of resources. Education is a top philanthropic concern. There will be no shortage of private sector groups willing to donate or to be involved in education initiatives. What we have missed all these years, however, is the marshalling of such resources to produce meaningful change and impact at the national level.

Thus, the first strategy under the resource mobilization framework can be summed up as Resources for Results.

The key to the success of 57-75 will not be in the resources raised per se, but in the appropriate and strategic allocation of these resources. Put resources where the results are, in schools and organizations that are ready and willing to take responsibility for results.

That is why community participation is very important. We must learn to look at resources from another vantage point: not as "manna" to be distributed without conditions to every school that needs an additional classroom or an additional set of books, but more as leverage, to motivate schools and educational organizations to deliver—in exchange for resources—improved student performance.

Remember that the goal of 57-75 is performance-based. Therefore, the use of resources must be carefully and creatively calibrated to produce the kind of performance we want from our students.

The second strategy is Resources Beget Resources through a national "synergy" of resource mobilization for education. The idea is to create a dynamic environment where resources are creatively sourced, leveraged and matched—and where local cooperation is fruitfully harnessed for such a task.

The desired result? That every town, city, province and region will be able to generate the resources needed to meet the goal of improving the quality of education. Hopefully, there will also be a powerful byproduct: the creation of many local partnerships and empowerment of local citizens for quality education.

Let me explain further. There will be three levels of resource mobilization: national/international, city/province, and community.

The League of Corporate Foundations' "Corporate Social Responsibility Roadmap" on education shows so many national level private sector groups implementing various education programs. Under the 57-75 campaign, these groups will be encouraged to examine their programs and explore ways of retrofitting or realigning these toward the common goal of 57-75.

Through retrofitting, these programs do not remain outside the scope of 57-75. They become resources that are tapped for the achievement of the goal.

Marketing campaigns and "road shows" will also be organized to "sell" 57-75 to national and international organizations that are not yet active in the education arena, but have the potential for such involvement.

Another potential source of support are the overseas Filipinos. According to Bangko Sentral data, in 2003 the cash donations from Filipinos abroad run up to $218 million, not counting donations brought home as well as the monetary worth of in-kind donations.

The Ayala Foundation USA, whose mission is to serve as a channel for Filipino-Americans who want to help their homeland, reports that from 2003 to 2005, more than 50 percent of the donations it received were for education.

Campaigns such as 57-75 are expected to generate excitement among our overseas Filipinos, who have always been looking for meaningful ways to help—especially in areas of greatest need in the Philippines.

There is exciting work to be done on the city and provincial levels. Private sector resources will be leveraged with local and community resources. There will also be a systematic effort to build alliances among the different education players in the city and the province—such as the governors and mayors, the local chambers of commerce, the city-based private colleges and universities, local companies, etc.

These alliances will then be trained in resource mobilization. We hope to see the flowering of local resource alliances for education—alliances that can, through creative and dynamic sourcing, leveraging, counterparting and marketing, raise the resources that will enable cities and provinces to meet the goal of 57 -75.

The "resources beget resources" strategy will also be implemented on the community level. In addition to the preparation of their strategic plans, schools and communities will be asked to provide counterpart contributions. Many schools and PTCAs have already demonstrated their capability for fundraising. Training the principals and PTCA officers in community-based resource mobilization techniques will enhance these capabilities further.

The third strategy is Rationalized Deployment of Resources.

Careful attention will be given to setting up the necessary mechanisms that will ensure rationalized resource deployment.

A central body—maybe a task force—will be formed to make the necessary policy guidelines on resource deployment, decide on broad issues, and monitor the trends and impact of the actual deployment of resources.

A national secretariat will set up and oversee a resource inventory and clearinghouse. This clearinghouse will track and pool resources of similar nature, record amounts/values and intended recipients, and match available resources with the schools' strategic plans, educational projects and inputs.

The resource clearinghouse will track actual pledges and donations and accommodate the "enrollment" of programs and projects that are aligned with 57-75. It will help ensure that resources are strategically invested in schools and organizations that are ready to implement programs designed to yield performance-related results.

Vicky Garchitorena is the president of Ayala Foundation Inc.

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Sinister plot to enslave Filipino people underway

SOMETHING HAS BEEN HAPPENING to our country since 2001, the year a scheming politician assumed the presidency without being elected into office. With the new leadership, the people expected better governance. Little did they know what was in store for them and their future. It all started with the appointment to extremely sensitive positions of individuals who were chosen—as subsequent events revealed—mainly for their corruptibility.

First to be assaulted was the electoral process. The billion-peso computerization "megascam" of the Comelec, the Garci tapes scandal, the intimidation and kidnapping of election officials in the South to subvert the people's will in the last elections—all these signaled the demise of our democratic institutions. That those responsible for this brazen travesty of our democracy have not been punished indicates that they acted on orders from the top.

Next was the raid on the treasury. The P728-million fertilizer scam, the diversion and disappearance of PhilHealth and OWWA funds, and the dissipation of the recovered Marcos wealth and the coco levy fund (just the tip of the iceberg?) showed that this government has been playing fast and loose with our money.

Next to be corrupted was the House of Representatives. We all witnessed the spectacle of congressmen shamelessly prostituting themselves to rescue the President from a second attempt to impeach her. Then we see the Armed Forces turning against the people it is sworn to protect by systematically murdering all those whose only "sin" was their opposition to the President and her governance.

And now come the new mercenaries who are pushing for Charter change for the all-too-obvious purposes of perpetuating the President and her minions in power, and abolishing the Senate, the only entity which has the guts to block the President's selfish ambitions. Evidently, they are funded by this government with tax money.

All these developments point to a master plan to subdue this country through a policy of deception and duplicity, manipulation of truth, hypocrisy and tomfoolery, bribery and intimidation, massive propaganda, sham elections and elimination of all opposition to this regime.

Funding for this master plan comes from the monstrous EVAT—the blow that is bringing a great number of our people to their knees. The rich may not mind it, after all, it is only the poor that the EVAT crucifies. With our limited income and meager resources, this 12-percent tax on everything we use and buy—food, medicine, water, electricity, etc.—is forcing us to choose between two evils: to join those fighting to oust the oppressors or to die from hunger, malnutrition and starvation.

Filipinos no longer trust the President who loves only herself. The only legacy she will leave us when she finally goes is the memory of her monstrous ego and a dunghill for our children.

—GALEN C. BOQUILLA,
San Vicente, Tarlac City 2300

SSS explains its 'net income'

THIS IS IN REFERENCE TO THE letter of Jose Angeles. (PDI, 9/19/06) Please allow us to answer some of the questions he raised.

1. He pointed out: "According to a news item headlined "SSS income up 23 percent to P3.7B (PDI, 9/1/06)—if I understand correctly—only the monthly contributions of its members are considered SSS income. No mention of the income from investments portfolio. So where does the income from the investments go?"

The P3.7 billion was the Social Security System's net income for the first semester this year (collected contributions plus investment income minus expenditures, which include operating expenses and benefit disbursements). SSS investment income grew 3.4 percent to P6.03 billion from P5.83 billion for the same period in 2005. Income from investment is set aside as part of the Reserve Fund.

2. Angeles asked "what accounting system or method the SSS uses." Then, he added: "May I request the SSS to cause the publication of its annual audited financial statement for the past three years, plus the interim financial statement for the first six months of 2006."

The SSS conforms to International Accounting Standards. The SSS' three-year audited financial statement are available at the SSS website (www.sss.gov.ph). Our financial performance in the first six months can also be viewed in the website.

3. He also suggested that "it would be to the best interest of all SSS members if the employees of the SSS are also members of the SSS and not of the Government Service Insurance System. I think and believe that if they are also members of the SSS they would be working hard for the interest of the members."

We assure Angeles that the SSS is working very hard for its members. We have implemented a Covenant of Service program that effectively eliminated backlogs in benefits and loans processing. In fact, salary loans, which normally take a week to process, now only take two days. On the other hand, retirement applications can now be processed in 15 working days, down from 30 to 45 working days. As civil servants, SSS employees are covered by the GSIS. But some SSS employees, who come from the private sector, continue to contribute as voluntary members.

4. Angeles accused SSS employees of "receiving fat salaries, plus some benefits like rice, while the benefits of the pensioners have not been received for more than a decade now."

We request Angeles to cite specific instances when SSS pensioners failed to receive their benefits. Conjectures may cause panic among pensioners. In fact, for the first six months of this year, retirement pension remains the highest benefit disbursement, registering a 10.1 percent increase to P11.48 billion from P10.42 billion in 2005.

—JOEL P. PALACIOS,
assistant vice president,
Media Affairs Department,
Social Security System,
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City

Unacted for 30 years

DOES IT TAKE 30 YEARS TO PROCESS A FREE Patent application?

We are referring here to Free Patent applications for four contiguous lots in Barangay Bolirao, Dagami, Leyte. Anacleto Lazarte filed his Free Patent claim to three lots on May 1, 1976. Socorro E. Juan filed her claim to another lot on Nov. 11, 1976.

Anacleto Lazarte, claiming primitive ownership dating back to May 1897, sold his rights and entitlements over all four lots to me on May 29, 1979, as evidenced by a public instrument titled "Confirmation of Absolute Sale of Untenanted Riceland." The sale was witnessed by his only heir, son Enrique Lazarte. As vendee of the four lots, my intervention in the claims was authorized by the Director of Lands on July 20, 1979.

The last hearing on the subject applications was conducted in December 1979. In that hearing, testimonial evidence was received. (Anacleto Lazarte died in 1990.) To beat lost time, opposing counsels suggested the filing of counter-memoranda, together with all pertinent documentary evidence; the filing was to be followed by clarificatory hearings, and, if necessary, supplemental memorandum would be submitted; after which the Free Patent applications would be considered for final resolution.

An ocular inspection though was conducted on June 10, 2006, but as of this writing, the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) has not set any next step toward the resolution of the applications.

Is this a portrayal of the vaunted strong republic of the present administration?

—TEOFILO T. REDUBLA,
Fatima Village, Tacloban City

UE, No. 1

UE MANILA
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1st Placer, May 2005
Dental Board Exam

UE CALOOCAN
Ms. Duchess Marie B. Cruz
1st Placer,
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UERM MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER
Dr. Karen L. Nielsen
1st Placer, August 2004
Medical Board Exam

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Gloria abloom in Singapore after 5 years

THE ARANTHERA Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo orchids on display at Singapore's National Orchid Garden. BLANCHE S. RIVERA

From page A1

during her first visit here as head of state in 2001, are now in full bloom at Singapore's National Orchid Garden, which boasts of 20,000 plants, the largest display of orchids in the world.

The hybrid orchid, cultivated from the species *Arachnis Ishbel* and *Renanthera rattanakosin*, is long and red, and has turned out to be one of the more slender plants in the garden.

The hybrid was first pollinated on June 15, 1995, and it first flowered on Aug. 16, 2000, or more than five years later.

The hybrid species was picked by Ms Arroyo herself during her visit to the National Orchid Garden in August 2001 to be named after her.

The *Aranthera gloria* is one of at least 67 orchids at the VIP Garden named after kings, princesses, emperors, heads of state and other famous public figures who had visited Singapore. It was planted next to the Renantanda Prince Norodom Sihanouk orchid and across from the Renanthera Emperor Akihito of Japan.

Not very pretty

"It's not a very pretty plant. Why did it take five years to flower?" asked one Filipino manager, who joined a city tour of Singapore Saturday.

The three-hectare National Orchid Garden, which has a collection of more than 1,000 species and 2,000 hybrids of orchids, is one of the highlights of the 52-ha Singapore Botanical Garden in Tanglin.

One of the most famous sections at the National Orchid Garden is the VIP Garden, which sits in the backyard of Burkill Hill, a colonial bungalow built in 1866. The hall, which once housed the garden's directors, is now used to host important functions, such as visits by heads of state and celebrities.

The other VIP orchids in the garden are the Dendrobium Queen Elizabeth, Dendrobium Margaret Thatcher, Dendrobium Benazir Bhutto, Ascocenda-Park Yon Kyoung, and the Aranthera-Vanda Mimi Palmer.

UP variety

There were 319,923 Filipino visitors to Singapore last year out of a total 8.9 million foreign tourists. In August alone, Singapore attracted some 870,000 tourists, a record high for the month.

Just two months ago, the University of the Philippines also named another hybrid plant after Ms Arroyo. The President received the hybrid *mussaenda* variety, named Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, from UP officials at Malacañang.

The Gloria Macapagal Arroyo is the product of crossing two popular *mussaenda* hybrids, the Doña Aurora and the Doña Evangelina, which was named after the President's mother.

Are days of newspapers numbered?

From page A1

nalists themselves, not from governments, officials, terrorists, corporate racketeers and underworld gangs—all of whom have lived an uneasy coexistence with newspapers.

They all may have tolerated newspapers as a necessary evil, but the days, if trends are correct, are fast approaching when there may no longer be newspapers or newspapermen and women to bash with torrents of libel cases or with assassins' bullets.

The threat to the existence of newspapers does not come from those afflicted by newspapers, but from the technological innovations spawned by the Internet—a rival vehicle for news and information dissemination.

According to The Economist, "at their best, newspapers hold governments and companies to account. They usually set the news agenda for the rest of the media. But in the rich world, they are an endangered species. The business of selling words to readers and selling readers to advertisers, which has sustained their role in society, is falling apart.

Falling circulation

"Of all the old media, newspapers have the most to lose from the Internet. Circulation has been falling in the United States, Western Europe, Latin America, Australia and New Zealand for decades (elsewhere, sales are rising). But of late, the Web has hastened the decline."

The death of newspapers is even more imminent, in the view of Philip Meyer, who, in his book "The Vanishing Newspaper," calculated that the first quarter of 2043 will be the moment when newsprint dies in the United States as the last exhausted reader tosses aside the last crumpled edition."

That is a shocking prediction of a fate of extinction far worse than the disappearance of dinosaurs from the planet—a process that took thousands of years, triggered by a cataclysmic force, which, according to some theories, includes a huge meteoric explosion on Earth, causing violent climatic change.

Grim statistics

The statistics on the dramatic decline of the newspapers are grim. Data published by The Age newspaper in Melbourne reveal that:

- Newspapers' share of advertising declined from 36 percent in 1955 to 30 percent in 2005.
- The number of people employed by American newspapers declined by 18 percent between 1990 and 2004.
- In 1980, more than 3,000 newspapers were published around the world. Today, there are four.
- In a 1994 survey (by the Pew Research Center), 58 percent of adults said they had read a newspaper the previous day. In 2006, the same survey found the figure had dropped to 40 percent.
- Britons, aged between 15 and 24, say they spend almost 30 percent less time reading national newspapers once they start using the Web, according to The Economist.

Different expectations

In a speech to the American Society Newspaper Editors in April last year, the multimedia tycoon Rupert Murdoch, who publishes a worldwide chain of newspapers, including the Times of London, said:

"The next generation of people accessing news and information have a different set of expectations about the kind of news they will get, including when and how they will get it, where they will get it from, and who will get it from.

"Consumers between the ages of 18 and 34 are increasingly using the Web as their medium of choice for news consumption. The Internet and, more specifically, Internet portals, are quickly becoming the favored destination for news among young consumers."

The Age article, by Graeme Philipson, said Murdoch went on to say, "You can interpret this how you wish. You might say that the declines are not precipitous, and that there's life in newspapers yet. You might be right, but I think the trend is unmistakable, and that newspapers in their current form will cease to exist within a decade or two."

Internet as info source

Within the newspaper industry itself, journalists are increasingly using the Internet as sources of information although there's a funny situation happening there. Online news is a medley of news amalgamated from various sources, mostly newspapers, and the situation is parasitical.

Online becomes reciprocal cannibalism but reportorial work is never eliminated. At its most basic function, reporters have to dig up facts and write the news, while Internet bloggers are army chair information users feeding on reportorial output and not doing their own investigation.

How this shift to the Internet affects the traditional function of journalism is pointed out by The Economist. It says that newspapers have not yet started to shut down in large numbers, but it is only a matter of time. During the next few decades half the rich world's general papers may fold.

Demise not harmful

"Nobody should relish the demise of once-great titles," it says. "But the decline of newspapers will not be harmful to society as some fear."

Democracy, remember, has already survived the television-led decline in circulation since the 1950s. It has survived as readers have shunned papers and papers have shunned what was in stuffier times thought of as serious news. And it will surely survive the decline to come.

"That is partly because a few titles that invest in the kind of investigative stories that often benefit society the most are in a good position to survive as long as their owners do a competent job of adjusting to changing circumstances. Publications, such as The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal, should be able to put up the price of their journalism to compensate for advertising revenues lost to the Internet, especially as they cater to a more global readership."

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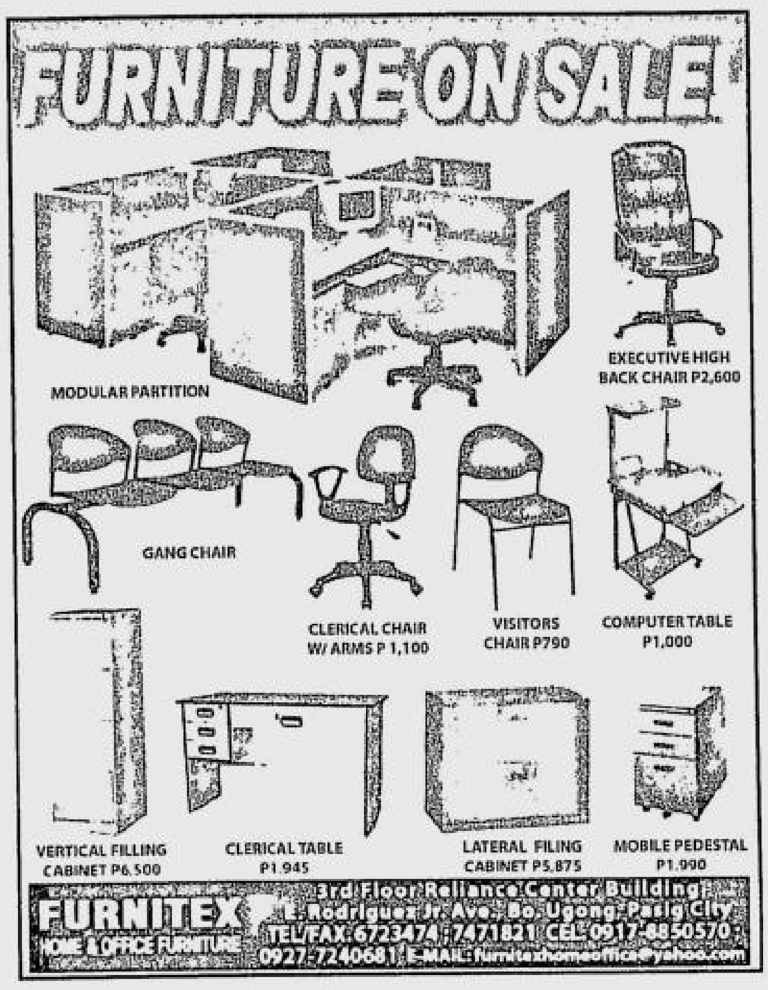

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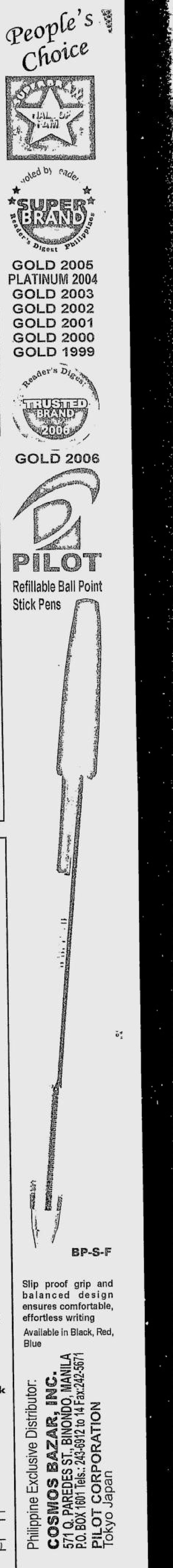

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5-year-old boy conquers Mactan Channel

From page A1

ical team examined him.

"I'm very proud of him. I was excited and nervous, but I knew he could do it," Junio's mother said.

Junio was supposed to start swimming at 7 a.m. from the ferryboat terminal in Lapu-Lapu City across from the Ouano wharf in Mandaue together with his coach, MSgt. Jairulla Jaitulla, and four frogmen from the Philippine Navy.

But this was delayed by 37 minutes because of the media frenzy. The boy went to the rear of a ferryboat, played with its steering wheel for a while, then jumped into the water without waiting for the cue from his father or organizers of the event.

Junio, along with his coach and the escorting Navy men, reached the Ouano wharf in roughly 20 minutes.

Escorts

A Navy boat, a speedboat from the Search and Rescue Team of Cebu City and two rubber boats from the Philippine Coast Guard escorted the boy.

Junio swam back toward Lapu-Lapu at around 8:15 a.m. but the strong current caused by passing ships and the polluted water slowed him down as he took an alternate route.

He stopped for several minutes by the San Miguel depot in Mandaue and took his time playing in the water off General Milling Corp., diving underwater a few times, on his way back to where he had jumped off.

"There was no instance that he wanted to give up," Jaitulla told reporters. "What took us long in the water was the current, and he was playing. I was telling him that we better speed up because we were already hungry."

100 laps a day

Jaitulla, a former Olympic swimmer, said Junio prepared for yesterday's event by doing more than 100 laps a day. He said Junio swam secretly from the pier of Naval Forces Central toward Ouano wharf on Wednesday, covering 3.6 km.

"The original plan was to finish the route in less than an hour but the current was too strong," said Jaitulla. He said that with his stamina, Junio could swim up to 10 km.

Junio is the youngest of five children. When he was 11 months old, while in the company of his siblings, he jumped into a pool, his father said.

"They were surprised to find him floating by using the dog-paddle style. From that time on, he joined them in practice," he added.

The elder Junio is hopeful that his son will land as the youngest to cross a channel in the Guinness Book of Records.

"This is not a competition but a demonstration of his skills. He was not competing with anybody. It's just that it was the first time a very young boy crossed the channel," the father said.

TONEE DESPOJO/CEBU DAILY NEWS

JUNIO even took his time playing in the water on his way back to where he jumped off.

Olympic dreams depend on Asiad

From page A1

ners, Herrera trains in Baguio City, in the cool highlands, away from the smog of Manila. "The climate is cool, the air is better, recovery is swifter," he says.

His regimen includes running for two hours on the track oval and on the road four times a week. Fridays are devoted to uphill runs and Saturdays to a full 42-kilometer marathon. Afternoons are spent on flexibility drills and weightlifting. Sunday is rest day.

National athletics coach Isidro del Prado describes the workout as internationally competitive. "The training in other countries is similar, it just depends on how the athletes would apply and adapt to it," he says.

Slim chance

But the chance of Herrera winning a medal in athletics in Doha is pretty much like that of the hapless Hector confronting Achilles at the gates of Troy. It will be no-contest for the 5-foot-4 Filipino runner.

"We honestly have slim chances," says Del Prado, 47. "It's hard because we don't have a continuous program and there are many other factors."

While there's a nutrition program, for example, an athlete's diet isn't closely monitored. No one will ever know if a runner eats rice and dried fish in the mornings before setting out to train rather than steak and eggs—the breakfast of champions.

"In other countries, it's more scientific. They also have a better and more regular food supply," says Del Prado.

"We're behind other countries when it comes to exposure in international competitions," he adds. "We just make do with what we have."

No vitamins

Herrera gets an P8,000 monthly allowance but not basic training equipment. To make both ends meet, athletes buy spike shoes and track suits from *ukay ukay* or thrift shops, says Del Prado.

"We haven't received any vitamins since June. We should have supplements by now," says Herrera.

"We lack funds," says Del Prado, explaining the ostensibly futile effort on the long and rocky road to the Beijing Olympics.

The Philippines' best finish in the Olympics is a silver in boxing. Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco snatched second in the light-flyweight division at the Atlanta Games in 1996, matching a similar runner-up finish by Anthony Villanueva in the featherweight class at the Tokyo Games 32 years earlier.

It's in boxing that Filipinos pin their brightest hopes for a first Olympic gold. Aficionados and supporters have brought in a Cuban trainer and are betting he can produce a winner using the unorthodox guerrilla tactics of Che Guevarra and Fidel Castro.

No height, no heft

A question haunts: Is there no Filipino capable of meeting the Olympic standards of citius, altius, fortius—swifter, higher, stronger?

Athletes rue that God has not gifted the Filipino with height and heft to excel on the track oval and compete with the likes of Maurice Green.

Jun Rey Bano, 22, the latest recruit to the national athletics squad, concedes his physical limitations. The education sophomore at the University of Santo Tomas weighs 61 kg and stands 5-foot-8.

Bano says he probably will face six-footers in Doha. "They have long legs. They only need to take one step, while I need two," says the farmer's son who is eyeing a slot in the 4 x 400-m event.

"It takes time to produce a champion. The peak period is seven to eight years. It really needs support," says Del Prado. "It's hard to do it now. They're asking why it takes so long, if it really takes that long."

Del Prado knows whereof he speaks. He ruled the 400m and 800m events in the SEA Games for nearly the entire 1980s.

"I started in 1979 at 18 years old, I peaked in competitions from '85 to '86," he says.

It was the golden years of local sports owed mainly to Gintong Alay, a well-planned national sports training program conceived and implemented during the Ferdinand Marcos years.

That program produced champions led by Asian sprint queen Lydia de Vega.

"We had good exposure then, we had many international tournaments. We had financial support, equipment, everything. They'll really support you," says Del Prado, himself a product of that rigorous project.

Unfortunately, the government failed to launch a sports program in the past decades similar to the Marcos initiative carried out by his nephew Michael Keon.

"It's only a dream now," Del Prado says.

Business proposition

Business leaders have a better suggestion. They say the corporate community is willing to fund a well-coppered sports development program if only sports leaders can put their act together.

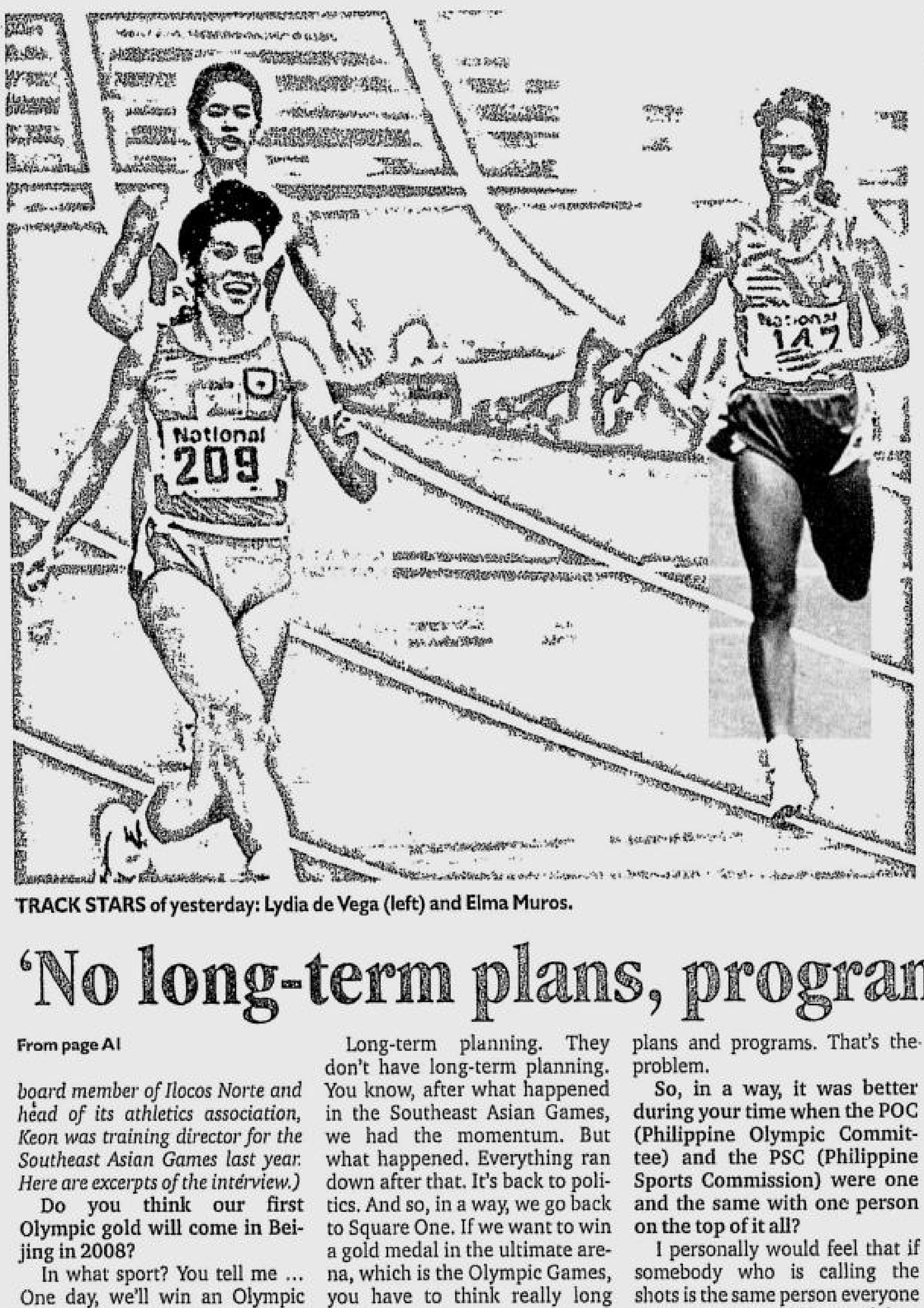
"There's always that nice feeling of winning," says Manuel V. Pangilinan, chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and Smart Communications. "Everybody wants a winner."

But Pangilinan says he sees no meaningful or rational sports program that gives the country a decent chance in Beijing. "It's replicated not only in one sport but in other sports as well. And it's replicated throughout the whole fabric of our national life."

His suggestions: "Good organization, taking a long-term view with objectives and funding and getting the right people and be meritorious about who represents the national team rather than *palakasan* (political clout)."

"The future young players are gonna get discouraged if they know that the way to the top is to suck up to somebody in power, or go to a patron," he adds.

"That's not what sports is meant to do. It's supposed to be a great leveler ... If there's ever any area in our national life that we should protect it should be sports," Pangilinan says.



TRACK STARS of yesterday: Lydia de Vega (left) and Elma Muros.

INQUIRER PHOTOS

'No long-term plans, programs'

From page A1

board member of Ilocos Norte and head of its athletics association, Keon was training director for the Southeast Asian Games last year. Here are excerpts of the interview.)

Do you think our first Olympic gold will come in Beijing in 2008?

In what sport? You tell me ... One day, we'll win an Olympic gold medal, just like one day, we eventually won the Southeast Asian Games. It will eventually happen, but the confluence of events is such that I couldn't optimistically say that we will win a gold medal. I don't see that.

Why? What are the factors that hinder us from winning it two years from now?

Long-term planning. They don't have long-term planning. You know, after what happened in the Southeast Asian Games, we had the momentum. But what happened. Everything ran down after that. It's back to politics. And so, in a way, we go back to Square One. If we want to win a gold medal in the ultimate arena, which is the Olympic Games, you have to think really long term.

So, you are saying we should have started that process after the Athens Olympics in 2004?

Well, sure, maybe even longer than that. That's the problem with Philippine sports. Because of the fact that you have such revolving door policy of the people in power, there's no continuity in plans and programs. That's the problem.

So, in a way, it was better during your time when the POC (Philippine Olympic Committee) and the PSC (Philippine Sports Commission) were one and the same with one person on the top of it all?

I personally would feel that if somebody who is calling the shots is the same person everyone believes in, it would be much better than having different people who are calling the shots who will be at odds with one another. That's obvious.

During your time, how far had you gone toward winning an Olympic gold?

We concentrated on the Southeast Asian Games and the Asian Games. Because we were just only trying to start a program. We were starting from scratch. I came in in 1979, when the first exposure the Philippines ever had in the SEA Games was only in 1977. The Philippines had only competed twice in the SEA Games, in 1977 and 1979. We were only in the infancy, beginning stages. So the SEA Games were, at that time, a big deal. We also had one Olympics in 1984, which was in LA (Los Angeles). But we didn't do that well in LA.

This time, the Olympic Games will be held here in Asia. China has been preparing for such a long time. In the last Olympic Games in Athens, China ended up second to the United States. And then if I remember it correctly, Japan was even in fourth place. So can you imagine, China and Japan in the top five?

That's why Doha will be a preparation for the Beijing Olympics. That's why our Philippine team will have a hard time in Doha because all the Asian countries are using that as basis of their selection to the Beijing Olympics. The standards in Doha would be really high. That's what people should now understand. In Doha, you know China and Japan are two rivals that will do everything to dominate it.

You have been there before. Can you tell us how the athletes back then compare with the present crop of athletes 20 years later?

The athletes are just as good as before ... Times are harder now than they were before. That's why people, maybe, think more about money. But that doesn't in anyway detract from the capability of the athletes. In fact, we have great athletes. It's not the athletes who fail. It's not the attitude of the athletes that fails. It's the system that fails the athletes.

So then, did the SEA Games victory last year reflect the kind of sports leaders we have?

Yeah, you know, there's a lot of politics in Philippine sports, that's a given. But if you are able to ensure that the NSAs (national sports associations) get sufficient funding, and you monitor the way money is spent, they will all live up to your expectations.

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5 Aglipayan priests fear they're next

By Christian V. Esguerra, *in Manila*
and Tonette Orejas, *Inquirer Central Luzon*

FIVE MORE PRIESTS BELONGING TO THE CHURCH OF SLAIN Bishop Alberto Ramento expressed fears they were next in line in the spate of extra-judicial killings believed to be orchestrated by the military.

All vocal critics of President Macapagal-Arroyo, the priests of the Iglesia Filipina Independente had received death threats and learned that they were supposedly in the military's order of battle, according to the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR).

The PCPR identified the clergymen as Fathers Terry Revollido of Pangasinan, Romeo Tagud of Negros, Marco Sulayao of Panay, Sonny Teleron of Western Mindanao, and Antonio Ablon of Cagayan de Oro.

Just last Friday, the group said Ablon had received a text message, saying in the local tongue: "Fr. Ablon, even the supreme bishop was killed; we will make you an example here in Cagayan de Oro."

Message clear

The sender was referring to Ramento, the Aglipayan Church's supreme leader who was stabbed dead allegedly by robbers inside the rectory of the San Sebastian Parish in Tarlac last Tuesday.

Though Tarlac police claimed to have solved the killing by arresting four alleged petty criminals in the province, Ramento's supporters remained convinced that the murder had political underpinnings.

"The police and other Malacañang agencies will not succeed in framing up common robbers as the culprit behind Bishop Alberto Ramento's killing," the PCPR said.

A fierce critic of Ms Arroyo, Ramento sat in the Citizen's Congress for Truth and Accountability that "tried" and "convicted" the President last year for election fraud and for the unabated killings of activists and Church leaders.

Cop in hot water

Ramento represented the Ecumenical Bishops Forum which he cochaired with Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez.

In the City of San Fernando, Pampanga, militants demanded the resignation of the Tarlac police chief who led the investigation of Ramento's murder.

Fernando Hicap, national chair of the fisherfolk alliance Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya), said Senior Supt. Nicanor Bartolome's work in the Ramento case was the "grandmother of all cover-up."

"We strongly urge Bartolome to quit his post. What he did was a complete obstruction of justice," Hicap said in a statement.

Hicap said Bartolome was "compelled to toe the cover-up line" of Malacañang, the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the military's Northern Luzon Command because he was "afraid to lose his post."

"If Bartolome is not afraid of anybody, then why did he not go beyond the robbery angle? His refusal to go aboveboard and beyond exposes him as a willing partner in crime of state security forces behind Ramento's killing," Hicap said.

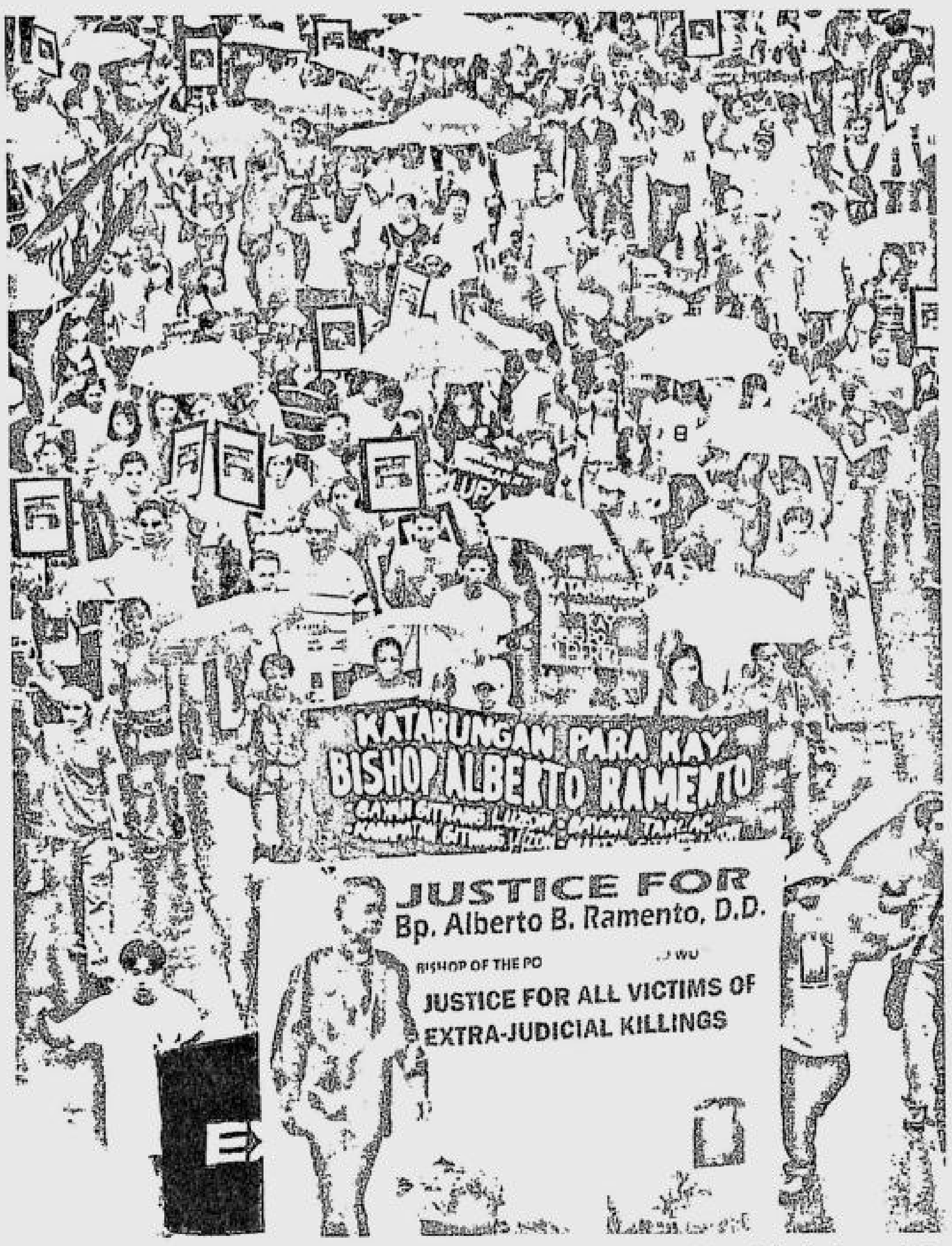
Bartolome, in a telephone interview, said he respected Hicap's views but said he won't resign because "I performed my work well."

"I respect their opinion but we based our investigation on evidence and testimonies," he said.

Robbery evidence

He described the evidence against suspects Michael Viado, Michael Quitalig, Raymon Perez and Joel Villanueva as "strong, clear and convincing."

Policemen recovered Ramento's ring and DVD player from the suspects who were arrested on Thursday and Friday. A fifth suspect, Efren Suarez, remains at large.



MEMBERS OF various human rights and Church groups and sympathizers join the funeral of Aglipayan Bishop Alberto Ramento, whose murder the Left insists was part of a government all-out war against communist rebels and critics of President Macapagal-Arroyo. RYAN LIM

Zambo floods kill 2

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Two persons drowned while another was declared missing as heavy rains since Oct. 4 triggered floods in the city.

Atilano Ade, regional director of the Office of Civil Defense and coordinator for the city disaster coordinating council, identified one of those who drowned as a certain Usman, a teenager. His younger brother remains missing since the brothers were carried away by the currents of a rampaging river in the village of San Jose Gusu on Oct. 4.

Ade said another still unidentified boy also drowned on Saturday.

"One is still missing," Ade told the INQUIRER after the city disaster coordinating council, chaired by Mayor Celso Lobregat, called for an emergency meeting on Sunday morning.

Francisco Barredo, the city social welfare officer, said a total of 850 houses in eight villages here have been submerged in floodwater that was neck or chest deep.

Barredo said affected by the floods were the villages of Pasonanca, Tugbungan, Tumaga, Putik, Guiwan, Baliwasan, San Jose Gusu and Tetuan. These villages were heavily flooded since Friday morning.

He said the hardest hit was Barangay Tugbungan where almost 400 families evacuated to the Tugbungan Elementary School.

"But we still have to move out the evacuees because the floods have also affected the school," Barredo said. *Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Priceless plant research materials destroyed by 'Milenyo'

LINEMEN from the Albay Electric Cooperative fix power lines along Rizal Street in Daraga, Albay damaged by Typhoon "Milenyo" last week. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

LOS BAÑOS, LAGUNA—ABOUT 70 PERCENT of the 45,978 genetic materials stored in the National Plant Genetic Resources Laboratory (NPGRL) genebank here since October 2002 were damaged by floodwaters and mud due to Typhoon "Milenyo" while 100 percent of the laboratory's root crop collections were buried in mud.

At least 5 percent of the laboratory's total seed collections were also damaged while damage to the facilities amounted to about P20 million, added a NPGRL report.

To help the NPGRL cope with the loss of its genetic resources of major Philippine crops, the International Rice Research Institute Genebank has allowed the use of its facilities.

The crops consist of cereals, food legumes, forage/pasture, plantation/industrial, root crops, medicinal plants and spices, fruit trees, nut trees, ornamentals, small fruits, bótanical collection, vegetables, and unclassified recently introduced crops.

"We are committed to doing everything we can to help our local colleagues get through this difficult period," said Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton, Irri Genebank head.

Genebanks are fundamental to a country's ability to feed itself and maintain its agricultural productivity, said Hamilton.

One of the component units of the Institute of Plant Breeding at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (IPB-UPLB), the NPGRL monitors and coordinates national efforts in the collection, conservation, utilization and exchange of plant genetic resources.

NPGRL facilities are expected to be back to normal operation within a month and a half, said Jose E. Hernandez, IPB crop science cluster director.

Milenyo wreaked havoc in the Bicol region, particularly in Sorsogon province.

To help restore power to Albay province and other parts of the region that suffered outages, at least 158 linemen from the Visayas volunteered their services.

Albay suffered an estimated P50-million damage to electricity after Milenyo caused a power blackout in the Bicol region.

Power supply was restored in more than 50 percent of five towns and two cities in Albay while residents in the remaining 11 towns and a city still had to endure the heat and the dark for more than a week now since Typhoon Milenyo caused massive destruction of electric and communication facilities in the Bicol region.

Rep. Joey Salceda said Malacañang has alloted P159 million for the restoration of power in the Bicol region and P55 million for Albay.

He said all these funds covering only the materials and supplies were given for free since they were calamity funds and not loans.

"Power is very critical in an area. Water and even communication facilities depend on power supply. Absence of power will kill the industries," he added.

The task force was warmly welcomed by local officials yesterday morning at the Renaissance Convention Center in this city. *Niña Catherine Calleja and Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

S.O.S. SORSOGON

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Watch this space Monday, Wednesday and Friday for reports on S.O.S. Sorsogon

(Seated, from left): Ely Navales Duran, Ella Nolasco, Francisco Duran, Bishop Emeritus Jesus Y. Varela and Isabel Abella; (Standing, from left) Fr. Gerardo Deveza, Dr. Alvin Pura, Dr. Yazmine Bahamonde, Fr. Noli Alparce, and Eugenia "Eggie" Apostol during last week's meeting. RODEL ROTONI
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Court junks sharing of $4.5-B gas income

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—THE COURT OF Appeals (CA) has dismissed the appeal of Kilusan Love Malampaya (KLM), a Palawan civil society group, asking the national government to immediately release the share of the province from the $4.5-billion Malampaya natural gas project.

The provincial government, however, said the dismissal does not affect a different civil suit they filed against the national government.

The appeal filed by the KLM resulted from a decision of a regional trial court in Palawan dismissing the group's petition seeking to require the national government to abide by the provisions of the Local Government Code in releasing the province's share in the Malampaya gas project.

Prior to the 2004 elections, the national government released P600 million for the province through Executive Order Nos. 254 and 254-A.

During a campaign sortie in Palawan in March 2004, President Macapagal-Arroyo said the amount was a financial assistance to Palawan.

The civil society group questioned the legality of both EOs and an interim agreement "respecting the sharing of proceeds of the Camago-Malampaya project," which was entered into by the national government and the provincial government.

The KLM said it believed that the EOs and the interim agreement violated the law because these were not in accordance with the Local Government Code, which says that Palawan was entitled to a 40-percent share in the Malampaya gas revenue that should be automatically released. *Jofelle P. Tesorio, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

LEGAL POT MELVIN GASCON/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON
While Metro Manila and other parts of Luzon struggled with rehabilitation efforts after Typhoon "Milenyo" last week, it's business as usual for this girl selling clay pots at the roadside in the central business district of Davao City, which has been spared from the wrath of the typhoon.

Why are they afraid to bring the issue of People's Initiative to the Filipino people?

1 There is no truth to claims by certain self-interested quarters that the new Constitution will reduce the powers of the Supreme Court as defined by the 1987 Constitution. Absolutely no truth. It is not common sensical to antagonize the Supreme Court.

2 There is no definite legal doctrine on the difference between amendment and revision. Even if there is and the People's Initiative can propose only amendments, the ***proposal to shift to a parliamentary system—resulting in the fusion of the Legislative and Executive branches of government—is an amendment and not a revision.***

3 It has been said that only a Constitutional Convention or a Constituent Assembly of Senators and Congressmen can revise the Constitution. Yet the Senators and Congressmen are only Representatives or Agents of the people. It is therefore clear that the people themselves—the Sovereign Filipino People—as the Principals can by themselves amend or revise the Constitution by direct action—the People's Initiative.

4 The 6.3 million signatures verified by Comelec registrars nationwide, in every province and congressional district in support of the People's Initiative petition, constitute a great number of Filipinos in this debate on Charter amendments. The number far exceeds the minimum constitutional requirement of 12 percent of registered voters nationwide for the initiative to prosper.

5 The figure also confirms the steady mounting increase—periodically tracked by public opinion surveys—in the Filipino people's support for the shift to a parliamentary system of government. It was 10 percent last year. By September this year, the figure jumped to 48 percent. Now it has exceeded 52 percent. Those for People's Initiative number 48 percent; for Constituent Assembly 28 percent; and for Constitutional Convention, favored by Senators, only 22 percent.

6 This growing support sends an unmistakable message: ***Filipinos are fed up with the presidential system and the political culture of negative politics*** that it has bred. They are fed up with the constant fighting among Senators and Congressmen, the Senate's failure to pass hundreds of critical laws, and the unending and often wild attacks by Senators on the President. Let's put an end to this democracy of deadlock, an end to negative and destructive politics.

7 Charter reform is the last remaining hope of the nation to bring about a new political system and make the country stable at home, competitive abroad, and respected in the community of nations.

8 The Comelec's dismissal of the petition was anchored on a non-existing doctrine because the Santiago ruling is only an opinion applicable only to the Delfin and Pirma cases of 1997 and not to the present *Sigaw ng Bayan* or any other People's Initiative petition.

9 Since there are clashing views on Charter reform and the People's Initiative to amend the Constitution, then ***why don't we let the Filipino people decide the issue once and for all***? Indeed, why are the opposition, the habitual critics, the spokesmen of the status quo, afraid to bring the issue to a nationwide plebiscite—for a direct vote by the Filipino people? Why are they raising technicalities at the Comelec and at the Supreme Court to prevent Charter reform from reaching the people and being decided by the people once and for all?

10 Let us call a national plebiscite—and let the Filipino people themselves decide the fate of Charter reform. Let them vote "Yes" or "No" on this historic amendment—the shift from a bicameral presidential to a unicameral parliamentary government.

PAID FOR BY KILUSAN NG MAMAMAYAN PARA SA MATATAG NA REPUBLIKA

Military says it rescued 3 girls from NPA

By Joey A. Gabieta
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—THE MILITARY SAID IT rescued two minors, identified as members of the New People's Army, in a remote village in Catbalogan, Samar last week.

Maj. Felix Mangyao, information officer of the 8th Infantry Division, said the military also arrested a female member of the New People's Army and seized from her a .45 cal. pistol and communist documents.

Mangyao said members of the 34th Infantry Battalion were on patrol when they saw the two girls and the woman rebel in Barangay Titurington, Catbalogan on Oct. 4.

When asked by the soldiers about their presence in the area, a mountainous village that is more than 20 km from the town proper, the three admitted they belong to the communist group.

The soldiers immediately brought them to the headquarters of the 8th Infantry Division, which is based in Camp Lukban, Catbalogan.

Maj. Gen. Rodrigo Maclang, commanding general of the 8th ID, welcomed the rescue of the two minors, aged 12 and 16.

He also condemned officials of the communist group, saying that minors like the two girls rescued by his men should not be used in armed conflict.

"Children have the right to live a peaceful life and should be spared from the armed conflict," Maclang was quoted as saying on the report of his information officer.

Mangyao told the INQUIRER that the father of one of the minors, who is from Barangay Pina of Catbalogan, was reported to be an active member of the New People's Army.

The girl's father allegedly forced her to join the underground movement, the Army officer said.

On the other hand, the other girl was lured into joining the NPA with a promise of a good future, Mangyao said.

The girl was a resident of Barangay Calundan, San Jorge, also in Samar.

The military identified the captured female NPA member as Aileen Roman, 32, a mother of four, who gave her address as Barangay Cawayan, also in Catbalogan.

According to the military, they recovered from Roman a .45 cal. pistol with ammunition, communist documents, extortion letters and personal belongings.

Gang victimizing Koreans busted

BAGUIO CITY—POLICE ON TUESDAY ARrested seven men suspected to be behind a spate of robberies that victimized Koreans living in the city.

Senior Supt. Isagani Nerez, Baguio police director, said the group was suspected to have held up 14 Korean students aboard a van in Rosario, La Union in July.

"They target foreigners because they know that they would not pursue criminal charges against them out of fear. If they are frightened, these foreigners would just leave the country and will not file cases against them," Nerez said.

Police reports said the suspects—taxi drivers James Borlongan, Angelito Tenirife and Neil Dagami, and Jayson Reynaldo, Nomer Tabligan, Rolando Sumalag and Jobnel Esperal—were planning to abduct Koreans and to rob a gasoline station here.

Seized from them were a .38 cal. gun, a Kia Besta van, a Toyota Revo taxicab and a motorcycle. Police also recovered from the suspects a shoulder bag, a laptop, cellular phone and electronic dictionary believed owned by their previous victims. *Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Phone Pals nip Aces; Dragons break through

GAMES WEDNESDAY (Araneta Coliseum)
4:35 p.m.—San Miguel vs. Sta. Lucia
7:20 p.m.—Air21 vs. Barangay Ginebra

By Musong R. Castillo

AFTER SURVIVING A TEST OF MANPOWER, Talk 'N Text last night hurdled one that was about character.

The rock-solid Phone Pals kept their poise when it came to the crunch and held off the Alaska Aces, 97-93, for their second straight win and a share of the early elimination-round lead in the PBA Philippine Cup.

"It was a good test of our character," said coach Derrick Pumaren, whose Phone Pals took the Araneta Coliseum floor fresh off an impressive thumping of the defending champion Purefoods Chunkee Giants just five nights ago.

"The players got excited after that win," said Pumaren. "They were overjoyed. A game like this (against Alaska) will make us better. There's no doubt that it will boost our confidence."

While the Phone Pals played according to form, newcomer Welcoat played better than expected and scored a breakthrough 85-75 decision of Coca-Cola in the curtain raiser.

"I didn't expect to win," said Welcoat coach Leo Austria, whose expansion ballclub rebounded from a horrid debut and won in just its second outing. "But I told my players that if we wanted to win, this (game) was our chance."

Asi Taulava, who has been brandishing a game that's as scary as his hairdo, capped a 25-point night with a long jumper that beat the shot clock and restored a four-point Talk 'N Text lead with 46 seconds to go.

The Aces, who fell to 1-2, missed grabbing a crucial rebound that would have given them a chance to forge extension with 13 seconds to go.

Guard Mike Cortez scattered 24 points, and almost brought the Aces back in the fight. He also had seven rebounds and eight assists in a 36-minute stint that practically went down the drain.

More Sports stories on A25-A28

The scores:

First Game

WELCOAT 85—Reyes 16, Lopez 13, Tangkay 11, Wainwright 10, Baguion 9, Cabatu 9, Sta. Maria 8, Gelig 7, Lao 2, Ybanez 0, Mente 0

COCA-COLA 75—Arigo 24, Salangsang 12, Yeo 10, Ferreria 10, Peek 8, Raneses 4, Miranda 4, Antonio 3, Enrile 0, Caceres 0.

Quarters: 18-16, 37-36, 63-54, 85-75

Second Game

TALK 'N TEXT 97—Taulava 25, Carey 14, Cardona 12, Alapag 12, Belano 12, Ritualo 10, Washington 6, Allado 4, Pablo 2.

ALASKA 93—Cortez 24, Cariaso 21, Thoss 15, Miller 13, Belasco 7, Dela Cruz 5, Ferriols 4, Laure 2, Juinio 2

Quarters: 25-24, 48-40 74-70 97-93

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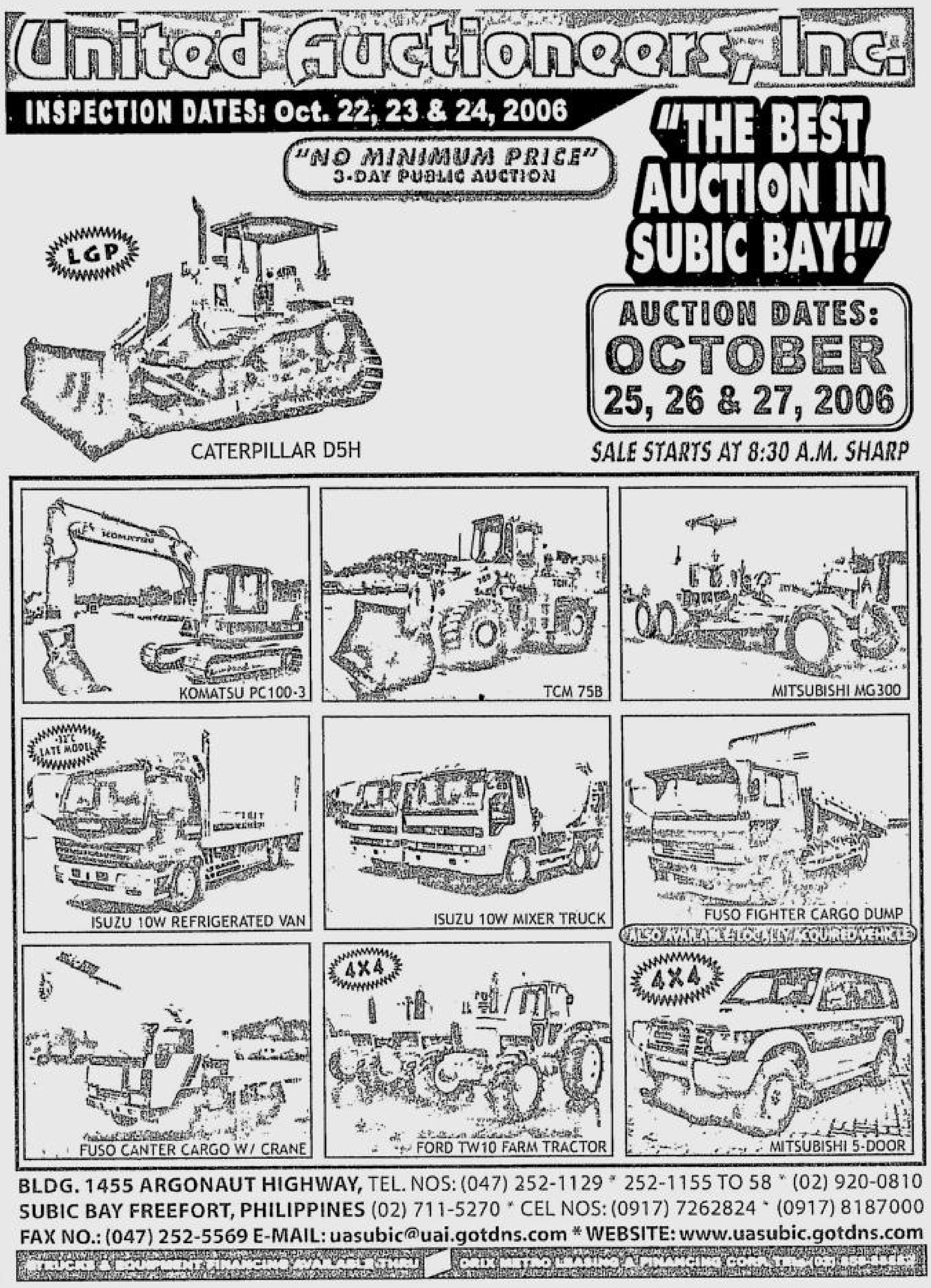

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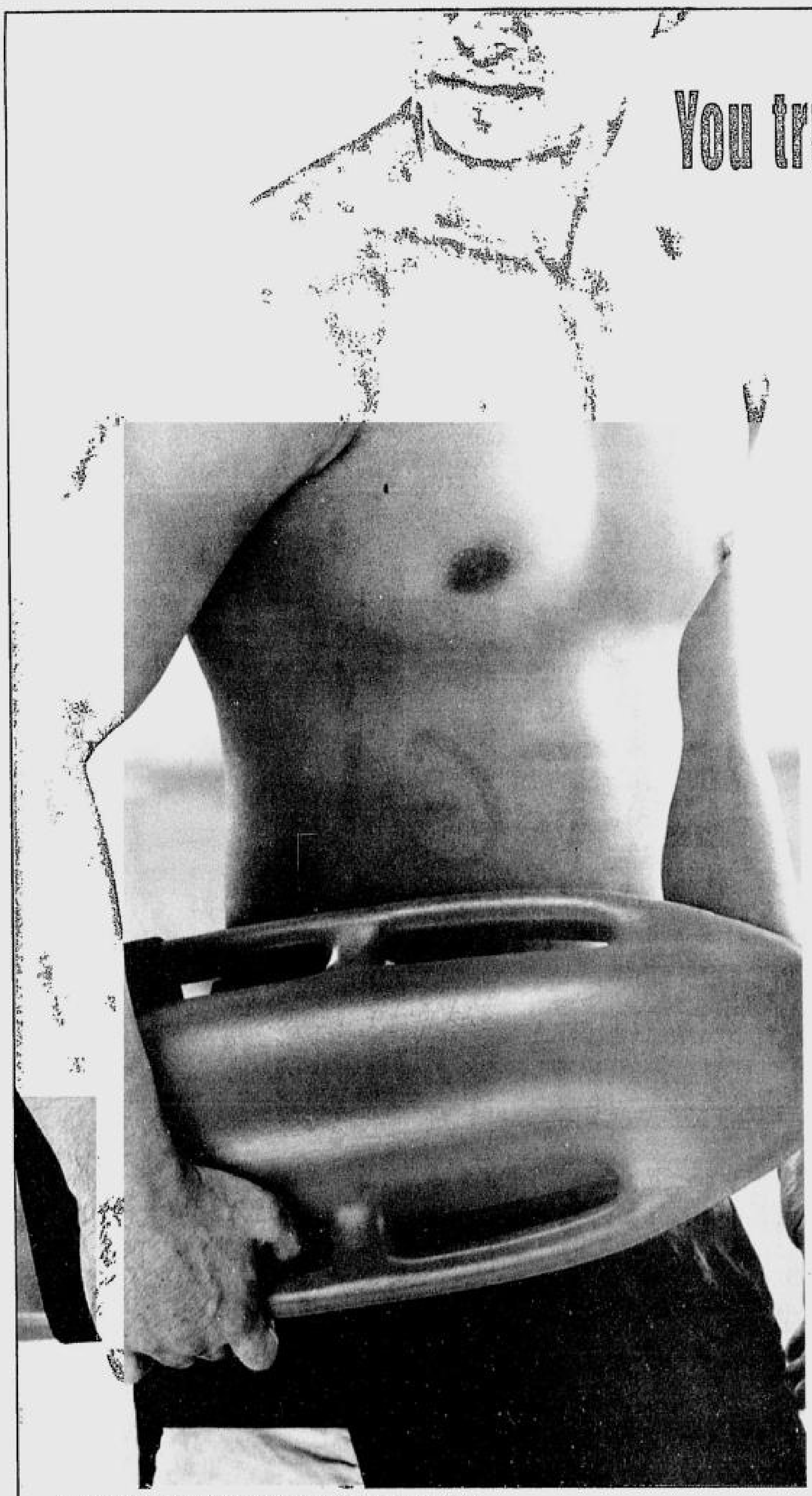
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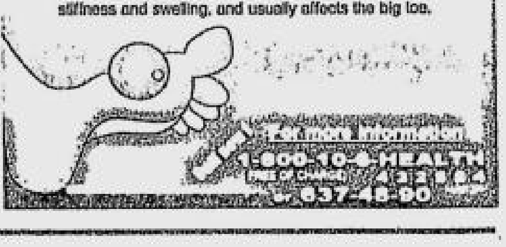

Manila's crime-prone areas identified

By Margaux C. Ortiz

POLICE HAVE IDENTIFIED THE MOST crime-prone areas in the City of Manila and have warned residents to be extra careful when passing through these roads.

Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa, acting director of the Manila Police District, said petty crimes such as snatching and robbery/holdup incidents occurred frequently on R-10 Road, España Street from Morayta to Lacson, Pedro Gil Street from Osmeña Highway to Plaza Hugo, and on Taft Avenue from Vito Cruz to Lawton.

He also urged commuters to be vigilant when passing through Recto Avenue from Abad Santos to Del Pan, Quezon Boulevard to Quezon Bridge, and from Quezon Boulevard to Legarda (University Belt area).

According to Abarzosa, criminals usually struck in the crime-prone areas from 4 p.m. to 12 midnight when workers and transients travel home from work.

"We have deployed line beat policemen to patrol these critical areas 24 hours a day to control the proliferation of criminal incidents," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Abarzosa, meanwhile, warned commuters not to wear expensive jewelry or use their cell phones in public areas to avoid catching the attention of thieves.

'Disenyo Milenyo' deadline for entries moved to Oct. 29

By Tarra V. Quismundo

DUE TO PUBLIC DEMAND, THE METROpolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) has extended the deadline for the submission of entries to its art competition, "Disenyo Milenyo."

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno announced yesterday that the agency has decided to move the deadline from Oct. 15 to Oct. 29.

"There are many students who would like to join the contest but they are busy with their finals so they asked us to give them more time to allow them to participate," Nacianceno said.

The MMDA agency had announced the holding of the competition a week ago to encourage people to create beautiful things out of trees felled by Typhoon "Milenyo," which struck Metro Manila and Luzon on Sept. 28.

Nacianceno said those looking for wood can go to the People Power Monument at the corner of Ortigas Avenue and Edsa where the MMDA has stocked tree trunks and branches collected during a Metro-wide cleanup.

The agency has not specified the type of artwork that can be entered in the competition. "Basically, it's free expression, what they can make out of wood coming from trees that have fallen. It's better to keep it that way. This is just to get people to think about what can be done with wood out of the fallen trees," Nacianceno had said in previous interviews.

Individual or team-created entries should be brought to the People Power Monument on Oct. 29 for the judging, the MMDA official added.

The MMDA has not yet announced what the prizes would be although Nacianceno said they have gathered around P100,000 in cash pledges from government officials, organizations and individuals.

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PGH: Still standing proud after 99 years

Grand lady on Taft Avenue continues to provide quality health care

By Ross S. Harper-Alonso
Contributor

ANYONE LOOKING FOR A ROMANTIC'S view of a public hospital would never think of finding it within the walls of the Philippine General Hospital (PGH). For over nine decades, the grand lady on Taft Avenue has become synonymous with quality health care for Filipinos while serving as a rigorous training ground for medical students.

As the PGH approaches its centennial in 2007, there's still the everyday drama but it's no longer shadowed by the stereotype images of a government hospital. Today, the historic institution stands proud after having been restored and modernized.

The hospital's history dates back to 1907, when the Philippine Commission passed an act establishing the Philippine Medical School. The school opened with only a handful of students who did not pay any tuition but had to make do with equipment borrowed from various government offices.

A certain Doctor Freer served as the school dean until 1912 and was succeeded by Dr. William Musgrave. First year students were admitted straight from high school without having to go through any preparatory college course. Many students with higher academic attainment were accepted on the strength of credentials from the only other medical school, the University of Sto. Tomas.

First batch

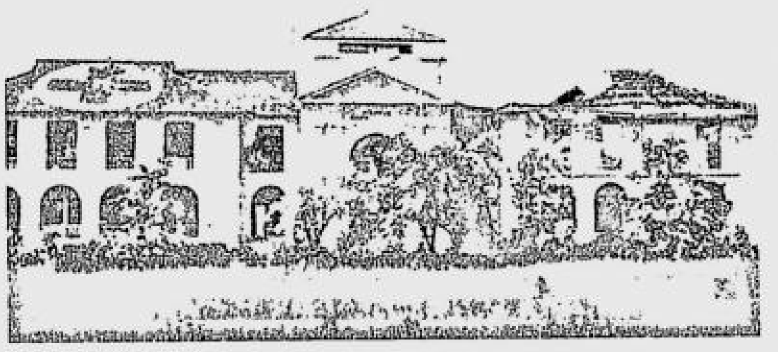
The curriculum was patterned after that of American medical schools, with additional units in tropical medicine. The school produced its first group of graduates—composed of eight men—in 1909. Under a law passed by the Philippine Commission, they could immediately practice medicine without having to pass a board exam.

In 1910, the Philippine Medical School was formally integrated as a unit of the University of the Philippines and was renamed the College of Medicine and Surgery. On Sept. 30 that same year, the hospital began serving the public with 330 beds under the directorship of Dr. Victor Heiser. A new building costing P780,000 was built by H. Thurber of the Manila Construction Company from 1909 to 1910.

The PGH's mission was not only to treat patients but to provide clinical instruction for students of the College of Medicine. The hospital and college have since been operating as complementary institutions, with the former serving as the college's "clinical laboratory."

The two institutions remained open through the wartime, producing the best of the best. The summa cum laude of UP Class 1944, Dr. Augusto Camara, holds the highest academic record for a graduating student at the college to date, with his grade point average of 1.08.

PHILIPPINE GENERAL HOSPITAL



THE RENOVATED and modernized Philippine General Hospital today (top photo) and in October 1945.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS BY DR. MIKE TEE, RITA TAMSE AND ELLEN YU

Cream of the crop

Camara is the second student to graduate summa cum laude after Dr. Gregoria Pallarca Marcelo of Class '42.

"I was 24 years old when I began my internship at PGH," Dr. Camara said. "My family had a house on Vermont Street (now Nakpil Street) in Malate and I walked to the hospital everyday. It was scary and a bit chaotic because we didn't know what was going to happen or what the Japanese was planning from day to day. Fortunately, they allowed us to go about our duties at the PGH without interruption. Just before the Manila Massacre, we evacuated to Nasugbu, Batangas where I joined the guerrillas as medical support."

Her classmate, Dr. Milagros Daez-Sevilla, also became a guerrilla in Dagupan after graduation. "I treated soldiers with gunshot wounds and many other illnesses. It was very difficult because we hardly had any food and medicine, only Quinine aspirin. We had to try to sleep through endless nights of gunfire and bombings. Truckloads of patients arrived at the hospital by the hour. But despite the poor and dangerous living conditions, everyone remained professional and it was business as usual at the PGH," she added.

Shining moment

Dr. Thelma Navarrete-Clemente also remembers the hardships but said she believes it was the medical staff's shining moment. "The students seemed to develop instant maturation, even undergoing instant transformation. Being carefree gave way to diligence, resourcefulness and a heightened sense of responsibility. When the bombing started, we stayed in the shelters and brought the patients with us. We had no books, we only had our medical equipment and herbal medicine for infections and pain. The shelters grew cramped because people came seeking refuge from the fighting," she recalled.

"However, these were times when sensitiveness and self-importance gave way to understanding and cooperation. Irritation, intolerance and indifference were supplanted by discipline, compassion and even sacrifice for the good of the greater number," she added.

Heroic intern

Rety Quisumbing was one of the young medical interns who reflected these values. An American soldier who mistook him for a Japanese soldier shot him as he was crawling on the open walkway connecting the hospital to the Cancer Institute.

Quisumbing, who was killed, was on his way back to the hospital after getting badly needed medical supplies from the institute.

He was the only hospital staff who died in the war.

The male interns' quarters was later renamed Quisumbing Hall to honor him.

A bust of Quisumbing, who was president of Class 1945, was also placed in the garden behind the PGH Nurse's Home, the place where he died 61 years ago.

The Nurse's Home is as old as PGH. Although the building has been neglected, the elegance of the 15-foot high ceilings, broad staircases, large doorways and windows can still take one's breath away. It was rumored to have been built by a powerful gentleman enamored by the beauty and kindness of a nurse.

"The nurses admitted into the UP School of Nursing not only had to have excellent grades but had to pass the grueling panel interview. It was unnerving and could be humiliating to some," said Grace Mercado-Valderama of Class of 1959 and former PGH director of nursing.

Tough screening

"Anyone who was short, had body odor or didn't look presentable didn't pass. The committee also probed into our family backgrounds and asked us questions that touched on our integrity. When we were asked why we wanted to be nurses, everyone's reply was, 'I want to serve humanity,'" Valderama added.

Although nursing students had to adhere to strict rules imposed at the Nurse's Home, it was still a wonderful place to be. "We were all close. The older students chaperoned the younger ones on dates and of course, we covered up for each other," she added with a mischievous smile.

"I lived at the Nurse's Home for three years and I enjoyed myself. At night, I would crawl through a hole in the wall and sneak off to UN Avenue to buy Juanchito's Bibingka. We feasted in the dark, trying to control our giggles, because we were not allowed to eat in the dorms," she explained.

"The dormitories were large and the beds were carefully lined up. Our white linen and mosquito nets were all the same, all meticulously tucked and folded. We were trained to make our beds as if we were military cadets," Valderama said.

The students were disciplined and always on their best behavior. They were dressed in immaculate, starched uniforms and pleated aprons, hair in tight buns and did not wear any jewelry. Euthenics or social graces was equally important and everyone was trained to observe proper decorum at all times. Socials were held every month at the Nurse's Home. Dressed in beautiful Filipiniana gowns, the nursing students danced with handsome bachelors from neighboring schools till midnight.

Candle ceremony

"We had what we called the "Candle Ceremony," recalled Valderama. "This was a formal ceremony we did before the start of the dance. The faculty and our escorts gathered at the foot of the staircase while we descended quietly, holding lighted candles. It was always a moving experience."

The nurses of PGH were in a league of their own, dedicated, respected and happy in their own sanctuary.

But things have changed since then. The corridors of the Nurse's Home are now quiet and bare. Still, the heart and soul of their noble profession is alive and doing well, like the PGH.

The writer is the niece of Dr. Ramon S. Suter, UPCM-PGH Class of 1962.

METROBRIEFS

Another killing in Pasig

POLICE are puzzled over the killing of a man who was found with two gunshot wounds in the head on a bridge in Pasig City on Saturday. On his chest were two sheets of paper on which were written the message: "Pushers and robbers are not allowed in Pasig City–Vigilante." This is the fifth time police have come across a dead body—with a message claiming the killing was the work of a vigilante group—since the discovery in the city of a compound of over 50 shabu dens in February. Residents phoned the police early Saturday morning, saying the bloodied body of a man was found on Ortigas Bridge in Pasig City. Police said the man was about 5'5" tall, between 40-50 years old, with wavy hair and fair complexion, wearing a pair of denim pants and a gray shirt with blue sleeves. He had a "Sigue-sigue Sputnik" tattoo on his body and another one which read "Rico Capati" on his back, police added.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Ready for Nov. 1 and 2

IN PREPARATION for the upcoming All Souls' Day commemoration, operatives of the Manila Police District (MPD) will conduct saturation drives to rid the city's cemeteries of criminal elements. MPD acting director Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa said the police would begin scouring the South Cemetery, North Cemetery, Chinese Cemetery and La Loma Cemetery next week. "We will make sure that illegal settlers vacate these cemeteries to ensure peace and security for visiting families and relatives on Nov. 1 and 2," Abarzosa told the INQUIRER in a phone interview. He added that criminals like robbers and snatchers run and hide in cemeteries after conducting illegal operations.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Retraining sessions

POLICE will hold retraining sessions on human rights and crime prevention for all barangay *tanod* (watchmen) in northern Metro Manila following the alleged involvement of a barangay chair and six of his watchmen in the murder of six men in Valenzuela City. Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Northern Police District director, said the retraining would first be held today in Barangay Bignay, Valenzuela City, where the suspects in the massacre are assigned. He said that police chiefs in Valenzuela, Caloocan, Malabon and Navotas would also schedule retraining sessions in their areas.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DID YOU KNOW

ON OCT. 9, 1820, a Filipino mob massacred 39 foreigners in Manila on the suspicion that they had poisoned the Pasig River, wells and other water sources to rid the country of Tagalogs. A cholera epidemic was raging back then and Filipinos were wondering why no foreigners had come down with the disease. Even French scientists who offered medical assistance were accused of administering poison to the sick. For some reason, Spaniards and Portuguese were spared from the slaughter.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

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Outspoken Putin critic shot dead in Moscow

MOSCOW—RUSSIAN JOURNALIST Anna Politkovskaya, an outspoken critic of President Vladimir Putin, was shot dead on Saturday at her apartment block in central Moscow, police said.

"According to initial information she was killed by two shots when leaving the lift. Neighbors found her body," a police source told Reuters. Police found a pistol and four rounds in the lift.

Politkovskaya, a 48-year-old mother of two, won international fame and numerous prizes for her dogged pursuit of rights abuses by Putin's government, particularly in the violent southern province of Chechnya.

"The first thing that comes to mind is that Anna was killed for her professional activities. We don't see any other motive for this terrible crime," said Vitaly Yaroshevsky, a deputy editor of the newspaper where Politkovskaya worked.

Moscow chief prosecutor Yuri Syomin told reporters at the crime scene, a nine-storey Soviet-era apartment building in central Moscow, that he was treating the death as murder.

Paramedics took Politkovskaya's body, wrapped in a white sheet, out of the building and put it into an ambulance. A middle-aged woman laid flowers at the doors of the building and stood with her head against the wall, crying.

Politkovskaya's silver Lada, filled with supermarket shopping bags, was parked outside the apartment block.

Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, a shareholder in Politkovskaya's newspaper Novaya Gazeta, called the killing a "savage crime." "It is a blow to the entire democratic, independent press," Gorbachev told Interfax news agency. "It is a grave crime against the country, against all of us." In the days before her death, Politkovskaya had been working on a story about torture in Chechnya, which was expected to be published on Monday, her newspaper said.

The rebel province has been a constant headache for the Kremlin. Russia sent troops in 1994 to crush an insurgency but after 12 years of bloodshed and the devastation of the province's capital Grozny, sporadic attacks continue.

Politkovskaya was a fierce critic of Putin, whom she accused of stifling freedom and failing to shake off his past as a KGB agent.

"I dislike him for … his cynicism, for his racism, for his lies … for the massacre of the innocents which went on throughout his first term as president," she wrote in her book "Putin's Russia" which was published overseas but not in Russia. *Reuters*

POLITKOVSKAYA in Feb. 27, 2001. REUTERS

2 German journalists killed in Afghanistan

KABUL—UNIDENTIFIED GUNmen shot dead two German journalists who were in a tent in the early hours of Saturday en route to the Afghanistan historical province of Bamiyan, officials said.

The two, a man and a woman, were shot in the province of Baghlan at about 1:20 a.m., an interior ministry spokesperson said.

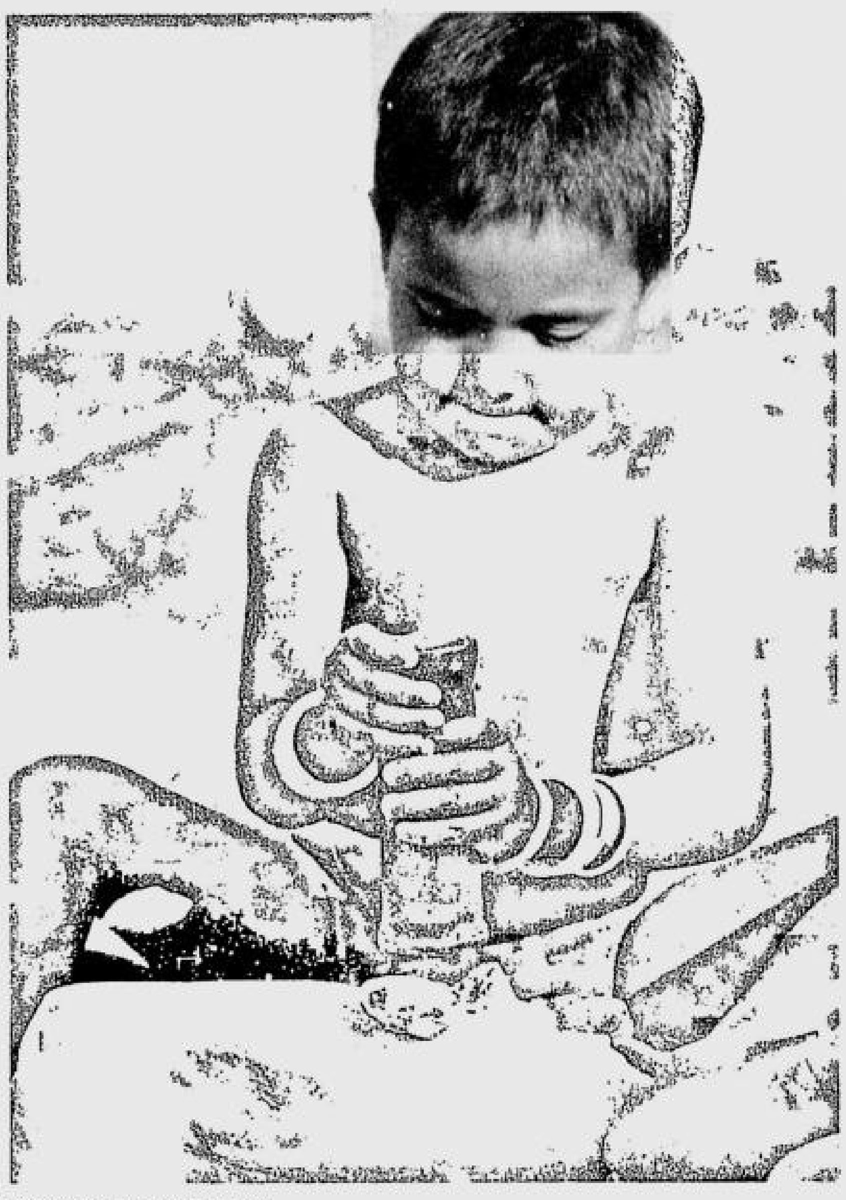
They had put up a tent for the night en route to the central province of Bamiyan, ministry spokesperson Zemarai Bashary told AFP.

"They were killed by unidentified people in their tent … They were shot dead with AK-47s," he said.

Bashary said the pair worked for the Deutsche Welle network. The attack was in the province's Tala Wa Barfak district which is about 150 kilometers (93 miles) northwest of Kabul over the Hindu Kush mountain range.

He could not say who might have been behind the murder or release the identities of the pair. "The investigation is ongoing," Bashary said.

Baghlan is relatively calm and has seen little of the Taliban-linked violence that is plaguing southern and eastern Afghanistan, although unrest has increased there this year. *AFP*



TO BE OUTLAWED

Nurba Kahtun, a 7-year-old girl, breaks stones on the outskirts of Siliguri. India is to launch a massive campaign making it clear that child labor, which activists fear could affect up to 60 million children in the South Asian nation, is to be outlawed. Some 12 million children among a population of 1.1 billion people are employed in India. AFP

Foley case upsets balance of gay GOPs in Washington

WASHINGTON—FOR GAY REPUBLICANS IN political Washington, reconciling their private lives and public roles has required a discreet, heads-down existence. But in the last week, the Mark Foley scandal has upset that careful balance.

Since Representative Foley, R-Fla., resigned after sending sexually explicit electronic messages to a male page, gay Republicans in Washington have been under what one describes as "siege and suspicion."

Some conservative groups blamed the episode on the "gay lifestyle" and the gathering force of the "gay agenda." Others equated homosexuality with pedophilia, a false link that has long outraged gay men and lesbians.

Conservative blogs and web sites pointed out that gay staff members played principal roles in investigating the Foley case, suggesting that the party was betrayed by gay men trying to hide misconduct by one of their own.

Some gay activists even began circulating a document known as "The List," a roster of gay congressional staff members and their Republican bosses.

"You can see where it would be easy for some people to blame gays for something that might bring down the party in Congress," said Brian Bennett, a gay Republican political consultant. He was a longtime chief of staff to former Rep. Robert K. Dornan, R-Calif., who regularly referred to gays as "Sodomites."

The presence of homosexuals, particularly gay men, in key staff positions has been an enduring if largely hidden staple of Republican life for decades, and particularly in recent years. They have played decisive roles in passing legislation, running campaigns and advancing careers.

Some have suggested that the leadership's response to Foley was borne of a squeamishness in dealing with a so-called gay issue. As the blame from the Foley case has been parceled out in recent days, some Republican staff members worried that any gay men caught up in the scandal would be treated unfairly.

"I'm just waiting for someone in a position of authority to make this a gay issue," Bennett said of the Foley incident.

Gay members of both parties describe the Foley matter as something that could jeopardize the role that gay men and lesbians have assumed in Republican politics.

One gay Republican campaign strategist said he feared that conservatives would "play to the base" and redouble their efforts to vilify homosexuals.

"It's one of the places the party goes when it's in trouble," he said. "A lot of us are holding our breath to see how this plays out."

New York Times News Service

FOLEY AFP

WORLDBRIEFS

Poll: Americans want Democrats to win

WASHINGTON—A majority of Americans want the opposition Democrats to take control of the US Congress, a poll released Saturday found. Fifty-three percent of those surveyed would like to see the Democrats secure a majority in Congress in the Nov. 7 elections, the Newsweek poll found. In contrast 35 percent say they would like the Republicans to retain control. "A plurality of Americans, 42 percent, now say they trust Democrats to do a better job of handling moral values; 36 percent say they trust Republicans more," the poll found. "This represents almost a complete reversal from an Aug. 2-Sept. 1, 2002 Kaiser Family Foundation/Harvard/Washington Post poll in which 31 percent of Americans said they would trust Democrats to handle moral values better while 44 percent said they would trust Republicans more." *AFP*

US, Iraqi troops kill 20 militants

DIWANIYA, IRAQ—US and Iraqi troops killed 20 suspected Shiite militiamen late on Saturday in the southern Iraqi city of Diwaniya in heavy clashes that police said went on into Sunday. The US military said the militants were killed after their forces had responded to an attack with rocket-propelled grenades as they entered the Shiite city to carry out "combat operations" on Saturday. US troops have maintained a large presence in the area since a battle in late August in which Shiite militiamen killed at least 20 soldiers. *Reuters*

Pakistanis mourn on quake anniversary

MUZAFFARABAD, PAKISTAN—Pakistan united in mourning on Sunday in memory of about 73,000 people killed in an earthquake exactly a year ago, while survivors vented frustration over the pace of reconstruction. A week into Ramadan, the Muslim fasting month, Pakistan's mosques have been even more crowded than usual. On Sunday, worshippers prayed in unison for the dead and survivors alike to mark the first anniversary of the nation's worst disaster. Sirens sounded across the nation to start a minute's silence. The quake struck at 8.52 a.m. on a Saturday morning, at a time when schools and government offices were full. With an intensity measured at 7.6, it lasted less than two minutes, yet destroyed the homes of more than three million people in North West Frontier Province and Pakistani Kashmir. *Reuters*

Bloody Bolivia tin mine battle

HUANUNI, BOLIVIA—Calm returned Saturday to a Bolivian tin mine district after 16 people were killed in battles between rival worker groups that shook the government of President Evo Morales. A truce between union and independent labor groups mediated by the government halted the violence which erupted Thursday over control of South America's biggest tin mine, leaving 16 killed and 61 wounded. Morales late Friday sacked his minister of mines, Walter Villaroel, and called the incident the worst of his presidency. *AFP*

Japan's Abe to head for N. Asia summits

TOKYO—Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe leaves on Sunday for summits with Chinese and South Korean leaders at which he will seek a thaw in ties chilled by the wartime past, and consult on North Korea's nuclear threat. Abe, 52, who will be making his first overseas visit since taking office on Sept. 26, meets Chinese President Hu Jintao and other leaders in Beijing on Sunday, and South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun in Seoul the next day. Beijing and Seoul refused summits with Abe's predecessor, Junichiro Koizumi, because of his pilgrimages to Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine, seen by critics as glorifying Japan's past militarism. "The change of government gives an opportunity for both sides to build a new relationship regardless of what has happened up to now," an aide to Abe told reporters in Beijing. *Reuters*

Thai PM selects Cabinet

BANGKOK—THAILand's military-installed premier Surayud Chulanont has submitted his cabinet list to the Royal Palace for the king's approval, a government spokesperson said Sunday.

Surayud, who was installed as Thailand's prime minister last Sunday after Thaksin Shinawatra was ousted in a bloodless coup on Sept. 19, is expected to officially announce his cabinet either Sunday or Monday.

Yongyuth Mayalarp, who will be the government's chief spokesperson, told AFP that the list of ministers had been sent to the Royal Palace in the last few days for approval.

"The announcement could be at any time," he said.

Surayud has so far refused to reveal any names of possible ministers, but central bank chief Pridiyathorn Devakula and Bangkok Bank executive chair Kosit Panpiemras have confirmed they will join his government.

Several other bankers are reportedly considering it.

Other names emerging include former ambassador to Washington and trade negotiator Nitya Pibulsonggram as foreign minister, and Piyasvasti Amranand, former head of the National Energy Policy Council, as energy minister. *AFP*

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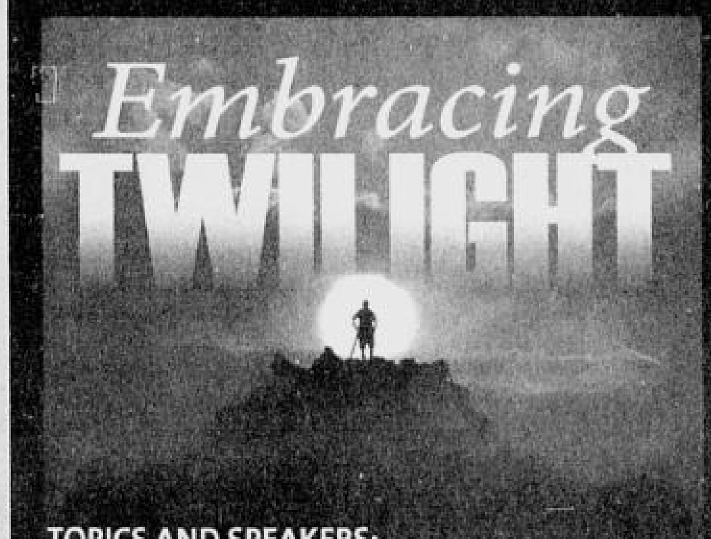

TOPICS AND SPEAKERS:

Last Stop: Coping With Loss in Advance
Dr. Elizabeth Rondain

Extended Parenthood: Parenting Round 2
Dr. Anna Vazquez-Genuino

Support Group Formation for the Elderly
Dr. Teresa Gustilo-Villasor

Finding Meaning in the 2nd Half of Life
Dr. Rene Samaniego

Biology of Dementia/Cognitive Decline
Dr. Perry Noble

Love in the Twilight Years
Dr. Baltazar V. Reyes, Jr.

Winters Shadow: Therapy for the Elderly
Dr. Pacita Ramos-Salceda

Spirituality in the Elderly
Sr. Angie Villanueva

Hippieng Kulelat: the Aging Addict
Dr. Edgardo Tolentino, Jr.

Into the Woods: Anxiety, Depression & Suicide
Dr. Jon Edward Jurilla

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

N. Korea to hold off nuke test till yearend, says report

LONDON—NORTH KOREA IS LIKELY TO DELAY a nuclear bomb test until at least year's end to see if the United States will lift sanctions and begin talks, Britain's Sunday Telegraph reported citing Russian officials in Pyongyang.

The paper cited unidentified Russian military officials as saying they had received information Pyongyang intended to give Washington up to three months to lift financial sanctions imposed last year and start direct talks.

"If Americans don't start (a) bilateral dialogue with Pyongyang and lift sanctions, then Kim Jong-Il is expected to give the order to carry on with the test, most likely in the second half of December or early January," one said.

North Korea announced Tuesday that it planned to test a bomb but did not give a date, triggering speculation that it could be as early as this weekend.

The shock announcement led to a UN Security Council statement Friday urging Pyongyang, which last year proclaimed itself a nuclear power, to renounce its intention and return to six-nation talks it has boycotted since last November.

Russian analysts told the Sunday Telegraph that, having built up tensions, the regime was likely now to fall silent.

"It needs to carefully monitor the situation, watch the reaction of the rest of the world and weigh all the pros and cons again," one analyst was quoted as saying.

"I would say that carrying out a nuclear test any time soon is not to North Korea's advantage." In the same report, the paper also said the weapon North Korea intended to detonate had a 20-kiloton yield, similar to the atom bomb dropped on Nagasaki in Japan at the end of World War II in 1945.

The military experts cited by the weekly British newspaper said the bomb was about 10 feet (three meters) long and weighed around four tons, but was too big to fit onto any missile the regime currently possesses.

Pyongyang has boycotted six-party talks—grouping North and South Korea, Japan, Russia, China and the United States—since November in protest at US sanctions on a Macau bank accused of laundering funds for the regime.

AFP

REUTERS

KIM JONG-IL (center) inspects Korean People's Army unit 851 Aug. 30.

Generals angry at remark want early test

BEIJING—NORTH KOREA MAY bring the date of a planned nuclear test forward after a contentious remark by China's UN ambassador angered generals in the reclusive country, a source with close ties to Pyongyang said on Sunday.

US envoy John Bolton said last week that while Britain, France and Japan had made clear a strong statement was needed to warn Pyongyang against testing, he was not certain "what North Korea's protectors on the (UN Security) Council are going to do."

In response, Chinese Ambassador Wang Guangya said: "I'm not sure which country he is referring to, but I think that for bad behavior in this world no one is going to protect them." Wang's remark riled North Korean generals who bristled at the notion of needing China's protection and urged their leader, Kim Jong-il, to bring the test date forward, said the source who requested anonymity.

"North Korea is especially unhappy with China," the source told Reuters after speaking with senior North Korean officials.

"This is chauvinism. North Korea does not need Chinese protection. North Korea is no longer a dependency," the source cited the North Koreans as saying.

Korea was a Chinese protectorate for several centuries until Japan seized it as a colony in 1910.

Pyongyang's nuclear test could now come as early as this week, the source said.

A second source with ties to the Chinese leadership said Beijing was alarmed that the chosen test site, deep inside an old coal mine in the north of the country, was just a few hundred kilometers (miles) from the Chinese border.

"It could have grave consequences on the environment in northeast China," said the source who asked not to be identified.

China's relations with North Korea were long characterized as being "as close as lips and teeth" after they fought side-by-side during the 1950-53 Korean War. China is a major aid donor but bilateral ties soured in recent months with Pyongyang complaining that Beijing was failing to champion its interests.

Ties would be further strained if North Korea were to conduct the nuclear test while this week's plenary session of the elite Central Committee of China's ruling Communist Party was under way. The gathering opened on Sunday and was due to run until Wednesday.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe flew to Beijing on Sunday for consultations with Chinese President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao on the North Korean nuclear threat. He was due to travel on to Seoul for talks with South Korean leaders on Monday.

The first source reiterated that despite the generals' wishes, there was still a chance North Korea might hold off on the test if it could win concessions from the United States.

"China, South Korea and Japan should convince the United States to drop financial sanctions and respect our sovereign right to peaceful use of nuclear energy instead of trying to stop us from testing," the source said.

North Korea attended several rounds of six-party talks with South Korea, the United States, Japan, Russia and China between 2003 and 2005 in an attempt to resolve the problem of its nuclear weapons ambitions. Then Pyongyang walked out, and has refused to return until Washington lifts financial sanctions over its alleged counterfeiting, money-laundering and drug trafficking.

If China fails to bring North Korea back to the six-party talks and Pyongyang proceeds with testing, China will be a "loser in this game and suffer in a massive way," political commentator Frank Zhou wrote in a recent essay.

"China will lose credibility and some luster of its becoming a new power for other countries to reckon with in the global hall of powers," Zhou wrote. *Reuters*

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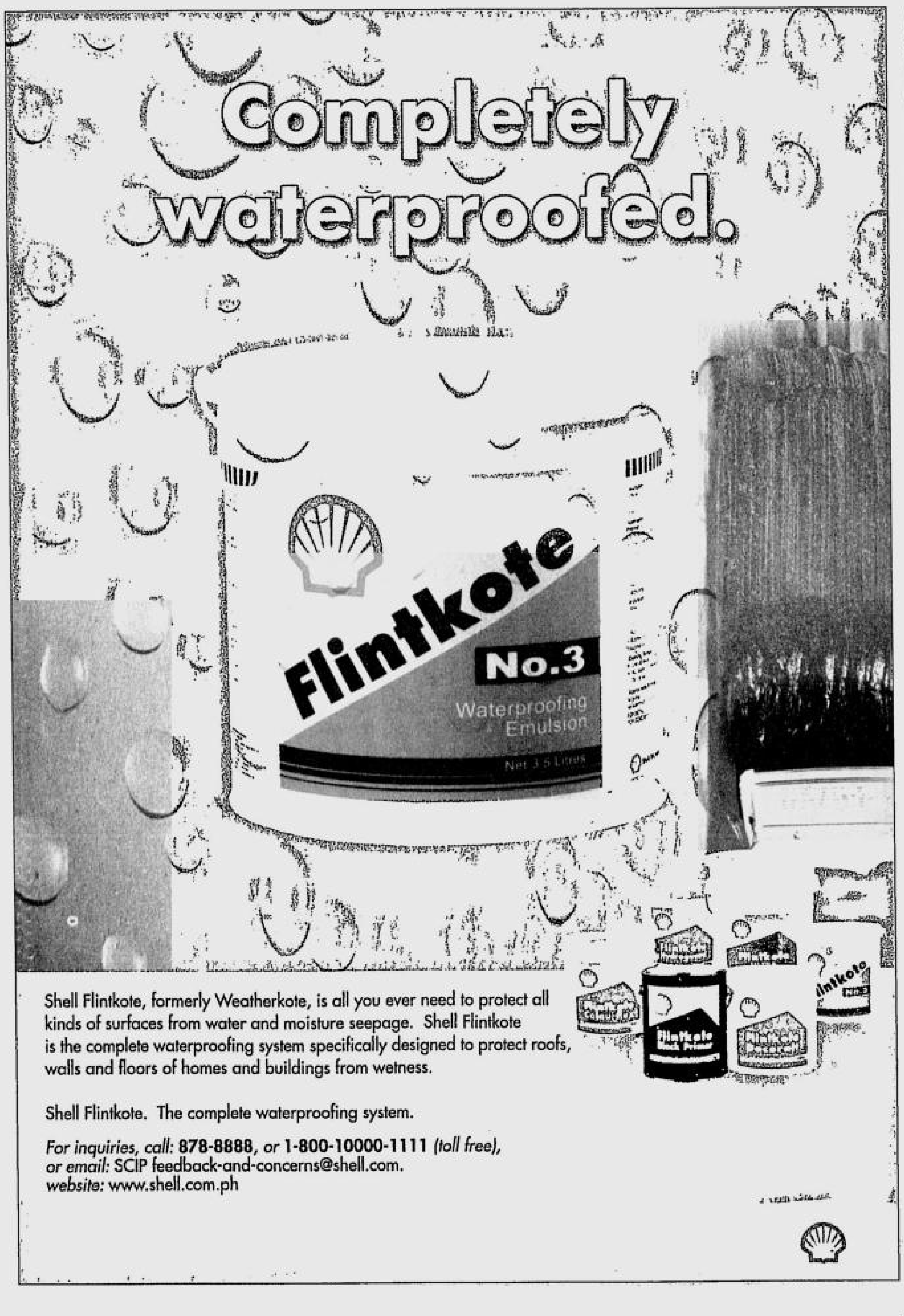

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Session 3: 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.
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WELCOAT court general Froilan Baguion dribbles past the defense of Coca-Cola's Kalani Ferreria in their game last night. The Dragons defeated the Tigers, 85-75. *Story on A19.* EDWIN BACASMAS

Pacman sharpens up, decks big sparmate

HERE'S FAIR WARNING TO Erik Morales. Manny Pacquiao already looks a winner.

This after the Filipino superstar knocked down his Swedish sparmate, Shadi Hamsho, an unbeaten super featherweight prospect, on Thursday at the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles where he is revving up for his rubber match with Morales next month.

The 5-foot-11 Hamsho, still unbeaten in eight fights, went down after Pacquiao unleashed a series of blows, based on an account by Los Angeles-based correspondent Ed De la Vega of Philboxing.com yesterday.

The knockdown, De la Vega reported, was confirmed to him by boxers Bobby Pacquiao, Gerry Peñalosa and Ernel Fontanilla.

"Manny knocked down his sparring partner and no one was there to take a picture," said De la Vega, quoting the the three boxers while they were on their way to the Wild Card Gym.

PACQUIAO: Series of big blows does it.

Pacquiao, who recently inked a deal with Oscar De la Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions, reported to the Wild Card Gym a bit ahead of his training schedule last month.

The Pacquiao-Golden Boy contract is good for seven fights. The Filipino ring icon reportedly received a $300,000 signing bonus on top of an assurance from De la Hoya himself that, win or lose, on Nov. 18 against Morales, he would be getting a rematch with WBC super featherweight champ Marco Antonio Barrera.

The third Pacquiao-Morales fight, dubbed the "Grand Finale," is scheduled at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas. The Filipino lost in their first meeting by a close but unanimous decision last year before the Filipino exacted revenge last January with a 10th-round stoppage.

Aside from Barrera, Pacquiao's victim in their first encounter, Golden Boy also promotes or co-promotes other big names in the super feather and lightweight division, such as Jesus Chavez, Joan Guzman, Jorge Barrios, and Juan Manuel Marquez. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

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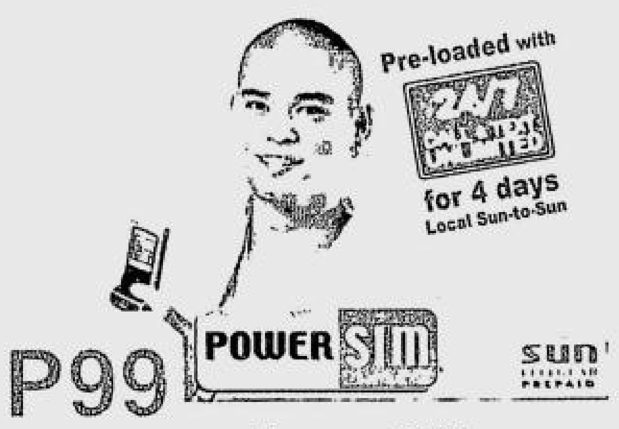

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*The Car Awards Group, Inc. and the Automobile Association Philippines are the official observers of the Petron Xtra Mile Challenge. Team Zayco Hermanos used a 1300 automatic transmission

Pagadian nips Montaña in OT

PAGADIAN CITY—EX-PROS BONG Marata, Peter Naron and Nelson Asaytono put up big games anew to help the Pagadian Explorers nip Montaña Pawnshop-Davao in overtime, 97-93, and tie idle Bacchus/Harbour Centre-San Juan for the lead in the 2006 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup caging at the packed city gym here.

Jonjon Gonzaga eluded Asaytono's defense in the last 1.3 seconds to send the game into overtime at 85.

But Marata, Naron, Asaytono and Melvin Mamaclay combined their efforts in the extra period to give Mayor Sammy Co's Explorers their second straight win in the tourney supported by Sulpicio Lines, Spring Cooking Oil, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Molten, Holiday Plaza Hotel-Cebu and Prime Channel.

Trader Armando Quibod's Jewelers suffered their second consecutive setback despite getting a conference-high 32 points from Randy Panerio.

The scores:

PAGADIAN 97—Marata 21, Naron 19, Quilo 13, Asaytono 12, Mamaclay 11, Malcontento 7, Johnson 4, Singco 4, Orquillas 3, Ayuk 3, Pamaran 0.

MONTAÑA 93—Panerio 32, Gonzaga 14, Atablanco 14, Bonifacio 6, Dawal 6, Ayson 6, Jalico 4, Quibod 3, Daja 0, Edrinal 0, Bajenting 0.

Quarters: 23-19, 44-48, 62-59, 85-85 (reg.), 97-93 (OT)

NBC National Cup Standings

STANDINGS	W	L
Harbour	2	0
Pagadian	2	0
Tagaytay	3	1
N. Cotabato	2	2
Valencia	1	2
Tribu Sugbu	1	2
Ozamiz	1	2
Cellular	0	1
Montana	0	2
Osmena-Cebu	x	x

Gonzales nears crown

Standings after Round 8:

6.5 points—**IM Jayson Gonzales (RP)**; 6.0—GM L. Bruzon (Cuba), GM V. Meijers (Latvia), IM M. Dutreeuw (Belgium), IM M. Senff (Germany), IM A. V. Morales (Peru); 5.5—GM S. Krivoshey (Ukraine); IM G. Souleides (Greece), IM M. Tissir (Morroco), IM M. Vassalo (Spain), R. Swinkels (Netherlands), R. Ris (Netherlands).

FILIPINO JAYSON GONZALES BESTED fellow International Master Georgios Souleides of Greece in 47 moves of a Kings Indian Defense to grab the solo lead with one round left in the 19th Es Vermar International Chess Open late Saturday at the Antiga Escola Graduada in Binisalem, Mallorca, Spain. He will face IM Martin Senff of Germany in the final round Sunday. Gonzales, however, said his chances for his third and last GM result was now nil since he only played against one GM after eight rounds. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Tigers battle Bombers in Champs caging

NO AMOUNT OF POST-CHAMPIONSHIP celebration—or even a nasty rumor—can distract the Santo Tomas Tigers.

As the Tigers continued to bask in their glorious UAAP title campaign, rumors spread wildly yesterday that Finals Most Valuable Player Jojo Duncil was shot dead in a Malate bar.

"I've been receiving calls early this morning (yesterday), it's not true," said UST team manager Clarence Aytona. "I called Jojo right away and I was able to talk to him. Yes, the team had an event in Malate (Saturday night). I don't know where the rumors came from."

In fact, the Tigers will be back on court, just a week after bagging the UAAP crown, to battle the Jose Rizal U Bombers in the Collegiate Champions League at 4 p.m. today at the UST gym.

Coach Pido Jarencio doesn't mind either if the Tigers were only seeded third in the tournament that pits the Top 16 varsity teams in the country.

GAMES TODAY
(*UST Gym*)
2 p.m.—Adamson vs Univ. of Visayas
4 p.m.—Santo Tomas vs Jose Rizal

The Ateneo Blue Eagles, who bowed to the Tigers in the UAAP Finals, are top seeds. NCAA champion San Beda is ranked No. 2.

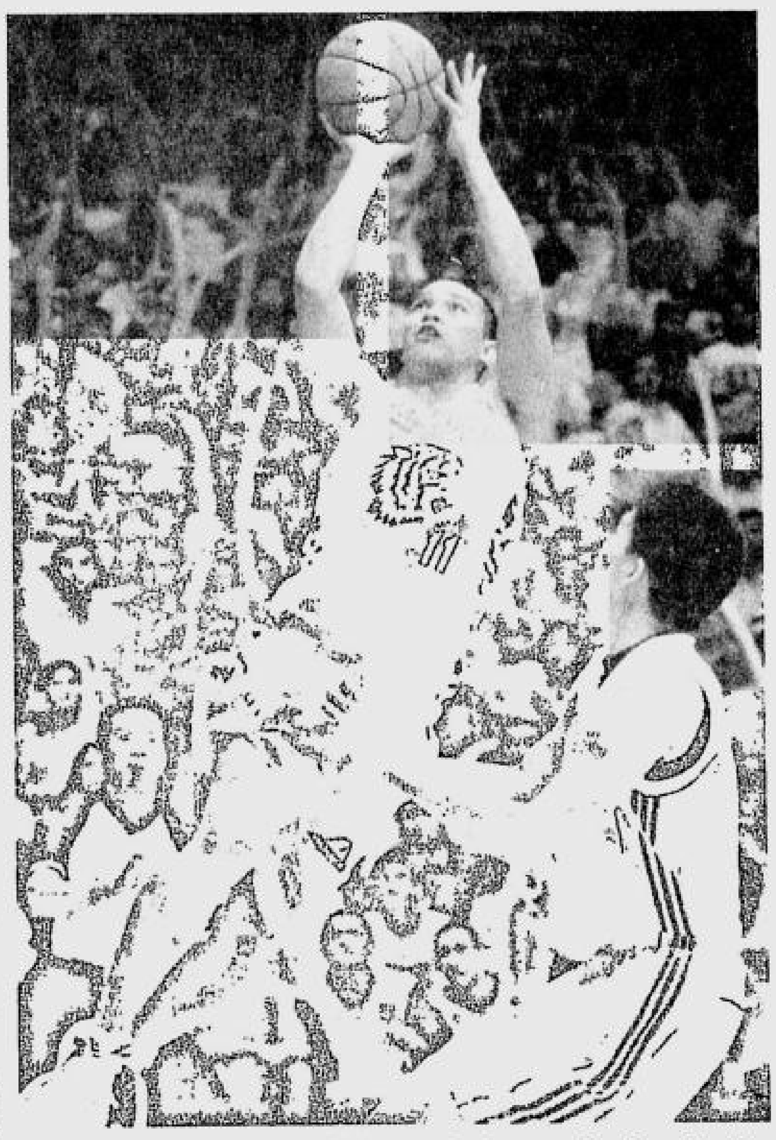
"It doesn't matter, we're always ready to play," said Jarencio.

Ateneo, University of the East (No. 5), Letran (No. 6) and Mapua (No.8) had already advanced to the quarterfinals after prevailing in their knockout assignments last week.

The seventh-ranked Adamson Falcons will also try to move to the next round when they tackle the University of the Visayas Lancers at 2 p.m.

A powerhouse in the Visayan varsity leagues, the Lancers are expected to put up a tough fight when the Falcons debut under new mentor Bogs Adornado.

Jasmine W. Payo



JOJO Duncil, UAAP Finals MVP, is a marked man against Jose Rizal U.

Holcim five blasts Iligan Archangels

GAME TOMORROW (*Xavier U Gym*)
6 p.m.—Holcim Pryce-MisOr vs. Warriors-GenSan

ILIGAN CITY—HOLCIM PRYCE-MISOR STARTed its 2006 ML Kwarta Padala Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MVBA) Second Conference campaign on a high note with a resounding road win over the Iligan Archangels, 88-77, Saturday at the MSU-IIT Gym.

Six players scored in twin digits to underscore their balanced attack, much to the delight of team owner and MVBA Chair Gov. Oscar Moreno, who joined his wards on the trip.

Trailing after the first period, 17-20, Mark Apepe and Jerome Barbosa both came off the bench and combined for 19 points in the second quarter to turn the game in MisOr's favor, 40-37.

Gilbert Demape, Dondon Mendoza and Bob Ilanga then kept the Archangels in check with timely hits, highlighted by Demape's crosscourt pass to a streaking Mendoza for their biggest lead of the game, 86-70.

The scores:

HOLCIM PRYCE-MISOR 88—Demape 17, Ilanga 16, Barbosa 11, Nailon 10, Apepe 10, Mendoza 10, Alfeche 9, Jabagat 3, Numeran 2, Alfante 0, Sanchez 0.

ILIGAN 77—Cabili 20, Gloria 13, France 11, Sereno 9, Ayodele 8, Cosingan 5, Oliveros 4, Orbe 3, Espinosa 2, Tundag 2, Duran 0, Cadavis 0, Bangloy 0.

Quarters: 17-20, 40-37, 63-56, 88-77

Ababa coasts to 2-shot win in DM

ABABA: Last qualifier

SAN MIGUEL, BUKIDNON—JONEL ABABA ONly needed a one-over-par 73 to post a two-shot win over Rufino Bayron yesterday in the fifth leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour at the Del Monte Golf Club here.

Ababa, who built a three-stroke lead over Titan Tabanas with a 69 Saturday, fired just one birdie for the day but the first National Caddies Open champion was virtually unchallenged in claiming the last berth to the national finals of the annual event sponsored by Samsung.

With his final 35-38 card, Ababa, who had earlier rounds of 69-71-69, finished with a 282 total.

Bayron, tied with Ababa after 36 holes, could only finish with a two-under 70 for a 284 total.

Mark Fernando completed a 1-2-3 finish by the standouts of the NCO, which is being handled by the Philippine Amateur Golf Development Foundation, as he closed out with a 71 to earn a share of third place at 285 with Tabanas (73).

Tonton Asistio shot a 70 and took fifth place at 286, followed by Boboy Jaraula (76-289), Paul Miñoza (70-289), Zaldy Gailon (75-290), Elmer Saban (73-290) and Dante Torres (75-296).

Ababa thus joined national player Marvin Dumandan, who topped the first leg at Royal Northwoods, in the finals next month at Mt. Malarayat along with former national champion Jun Bernis (Baguio CC), Gene Bondoc (Rancho Palos Verdes) and Ferdie Aunzo (Splendido Taal).

Meanwhile, Meloy Cubillo dominated men's Class A with a 73-144 to beat Belen Arancon (76-152) while Pili Sison finished third with 76-153.

Luis Jainga (82) nipped Clyde Mondilla in the playoff to rule Class B and advance to the finals. Jainga and Mondilla (78) wound up with 159s.

Trust Terrible, but don't doubt Pacman

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

NO REASON TO DOUBT WHAT ERIK MORALES HAS been boasting. The fellow will make 130 lb for his "Grand Finale" encounter with Manny Pacquiao next month.

The thing to ask is: how much of the sharp, shifty old Mexican warrior will be left in the punished body of El Terrible come fight time?

OK, Morales might struggle a bit.

But he will definitely make the super featherweight limit, swears Rex "Wakee" Salud, Pacquiao's trusted Cebu-based ally.

Salud returned from Los Angeles Saturday and confided he was amazed at the swiftness Morales had shed excess poundage.

Salud said he saw Morales in California recently and the fellow appeared lean and fresh, with no hint of either dehydration or tiredness.

* * *

So, forget what the handlers of Oscar Larios, whom Pacquiao manhandled last July, had swore that Morales would have to cut off both legs in order to make 130 lb.

As far as making the weight, it's no longer a promise, but more of a certainty on Morales' part.

Well, from the look of things, Pacquiao himself cannot afford to be less than super fit for his Nov. 18 clash against the three-time world champ.

However, as the third encounter between these two great warriors won't be decided on the weighing scales, Morales must, this early, device escape routes.

No doubt, Pacquiao will dig in and press hard to seek an early stoppage.

And, mind you, Morales won't find it easy to run away from one of the sharpest, strongest stars in the prizefight world today.

* * *

For a fact, Morales is not known to avoid furious skirmishes.

He cannot be classified as a stand-up fighter like Pacquiao, but Morales is just too proud to step out of hot, blazing action.

Which only means that the Nov. 18 rubber match between Pacquiao and Morales at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas should help rouse prizefighting from an unscheduled slumber.

Ho-hum. Hardly had fans awaken from the slow drag between Marco Antonio Barrera and Rocky Juarez than another lullaby was again inflicted on them yesterday by Diego Corrales and Joel Casamayor at the Mandalay in Las Vegas.

* * *

You see, this piece is being rushed a couple of days after this reporter had a glimpse of the young Roberto Duran, in the early '70s, in a fight against Esteban de Jesus in New York.

It was indeed a pleasure to note that Pacquiao has a lot of resemblance to the young Duran.

No, not exactly a clone, but the similarities in the moves—the way he bobs his brave head, the footwork and pressure pushes—were quite amusing.

Duran, by the way, was at the fight scene rooting for Corrales yesterday.

No need for Pacquiao to borrow that old film to confirm what we had observed.

But if Morales would need some technical tips on how to use the ring to win, without exactly running away, that victorious display by De Jesus could be of help.

This suggestion comes on the heels of the Morales camp claim that they have devised a sure-fire way to beat Pacquiao.

The Mexican camp vowed it would parade the old Morales against Pacquiao next month.

That was rather vague. Truth is that, after all that's been said and done, Morales need not say a word to generate a sellout of the Grand Finale card.

You bet the boxing world, after those sleepers, would come running to Thomas & Mack come Nov. 18.

Not exactly because of Morales—because of Pacquiao who, just like the old Duran, is known to glow, growl and explode each time he enters the ring.

No reason to doubt. Pacquiao will set the rubber match on fire.

(*FONDLY*: Tony Bulatao, childhood friend, bids goodbye to a *kabayan*, Jesus Natanauan. He writes: "Jess was a Filipino who was noble in thought, words, and deeds; a civil servant in the true sense of the term. Even after retirement, he continued to care about his country in his own simple ways. He contributed profound commentaries for publication. He avoided pomposity among people. He associated with very few friends, but was admired by those who knew him. His style was so simple yet difficult to follow, ironically because of its clear sincerity. If more Filipinos could only conduct themselves like him. . . Jess would drink to that.")

SPORTSWATCH

Asiad, volley on the menu

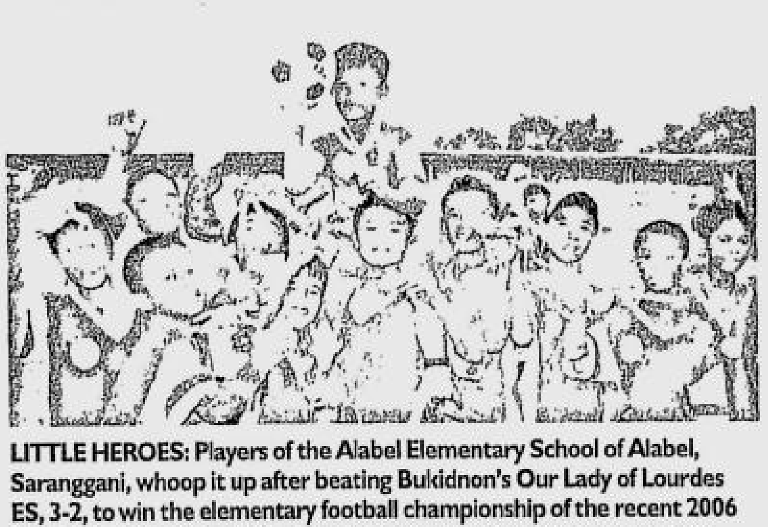
THE ASIAN GAMES AND LADIES BEACH VOLleyball take center stage in the PSA Forum tomorrow at the main function room of the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila. Retired Gen. Mario Tanchanco, deputy chef de mission of Team Philippines to the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, will talk about the latest developments in the country's preparations for the quadrennial meet set Dec. 1-15. Also guesting in the 10:30 a.m. session are Orville Roque, president of Astra group, the distributor of Extreme Magic Sing, and NBN 4 general manager Joey Isabelo who will discuss the tie-up between the two groups for the Doha Games. Also attending the public sports program aired over Sports Radio 918 and sponsored by Pagcor, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Manila Sports Council chair Ali Atienza are officials and participants in the fourth leg of the Petron Ladies Beach Volleyball Tournament headed by Tisha Abundo, Des Lawas of Kidsworld and Speedo's Leni Delmendo.

PCAP derby 5th leg today

EXPLOSIVE MATCHES SPICE UP THE FIFTH leg of Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-stag derby series today at the Makati Coliseum. The 70-fight program is sponsored by B-Meg Derby Ace and Gran Matador. The team of William Go, Allan Siaco and James Uy (JU AS WG Lucban) topped the fourth PCAP derby last week, while Boy Marzo (BMRR) and Honey Yu (Princess Bernice) emerged as runners-up. The remaining PCAP stagfests are slated Oct. 16, 21 and 28. Meanwhile, the submission of entries for the "Winning Time Derby" 5-stag special on Oct. 11 will be held tomorrow. For inquiries, call 896-3545 or 895-6475.

'Labanan' stagfest begins

THE FIRST-EVER "NO ENTRY FEE LABANAN" 7-stag derby series, a nationwide battle of gamefowl breeders conceptualized by popular cockfighter Patrick Antonio and supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, starts today at San Juan Coliseum with more than 70 fights on tap. A cash pot of P1.3 million awaits the winners in the Metro Manila leg. Separate events are scheduled for breeders in Region II and Cebu-Eastern Visayas. A participant may join the 3-stag eliminations by presenting P1,000 proof of purchase of any Sagupaan products. The Metro Manila eliminations are set at the SJC (Oct. 9 and 16), Pasig Square Garden (Oct. 15), Pasay City Cockpit (Oct. 20) and Oct. 24 (Araneta Coliseum). For inquiries, call 0916-4763030 or 0917-8064758.



LITTLE HEROES: Players of the Alabel Elementary School of Alabel, Saranggani, whoop it up after beating Bukidnon's Our Lady of Lourdes ES, 3-2, to win the elementary football championship of the recent 2006 Milo Little Olympics at the Pelaez Sports Complex in Cagayan de Oro City. Jomer Calimot (with the ball) scored the tie-breaker in the kick-off after both teams had battled to scoreless standoff in regulation.

Palos Verdes unchallenged at home anew

DAVAO—THE RANCHO PALOS VERDES contingent kept its winning tradition at home by emerging with the most points after the first leg of the Sta. Lucia Golf Tour 2006 which ended here Saturday.

The Palos Verdes team ruled Group II and posted fighting runner-up finishes in the two other groups in a solid performance that netted the host club 39 points and an eight-point lead over Eagle Ridge in the overall standings.

Palos Verdes 2, made up of Modesto Castillo, Ronald Galicia, Jaime Tan Jr. and Victor Co, survived a big scare from Summit Point 3 to win Group II by three and highlight the Davaoeños' domination of the Mindanao leg of the nationwide Sta. Lucia Tour featuring members of clubs under the umbrella of the real estate giant.

As defending overall champion Alta Vista of Cebu almost got blanked in Group III, it was Luzon team Eagle Ridge which challenged the hosts by topping Group III through Marlon Vilanueva, Alex Honrado and Thomas de Vera, placing third in Group I and fifth in Group II for 31 points.

Alta Vista's rousing win in Group I, behind the sizzling final-day output of Wendell Yap, Enrico Solon and Dennis Canoy, and a runner-up showing in Group II were put to naught by a seventh place finish in Group III. The Cebuanos pooled 27 points.

Lakewood of Cabanatuan and Summit Point of Laguna tied for fourth with 20 points, Royale Tagaytay was sixth with 12, Orchard of Cavite had 10 and Caliraya Springs finished last with just a point in the series supported by Unirock, Readycon, Rizgolf Sports Marketing and Pisanti Golf.

Matias Aznar IV won the championship class for Alta Vista, Jaime Tan Sr. took Class A for Palos Verdes, Alan Alegre topped Class B for Summit Point, Billy Sta. Maria ruled Class C for Royale Tagaytay and Cliff Yu dominated Class D for Palos Verdes.

Aznar (50-103) beat teammate Solon by four; Tan (52-98) rallied to beat Alta's Dennis Canoy by one; Alegre (50-99) posted a four-stroke win over Alta's Wendell Yap; Sta. Maria (45-81) edged Wilson Lu of Palos by one and Yu (38-79) finished two clear of Teddy Valenton of Summit.

ALONSO: Virtual champion AP

Renault's Alonso nears 2nd F1 crown

SUZUKA, JAPAN—REIGNING WORLD CHAMPION Fernando Alonso won the Japanese Grand Prix on Sunday and heads into the season's final race with a 10-point lead over Michael Schumacher, who dropped out in 37th lap with a blown engine.

The Formula One driving title will be decided at the Brazilian GP on Oct. 22 with Renault's Alonso leading Schumacher of Ferrari, 126-116, in the standings.

"The championship will be decided in Brazil as we all expected," said Alonso. "We have to be safe, don't take too many risks."

Felipe Massa finished second Thursday to keep alive Ferrari's hopes of winning the constructor's title, while Alonso's teammate Giancarlo Fisichella finished third.

After Schumacher went out, Alonso maintained his gap over Massa through the last 15 laps, and after crossing the finish line, he swerved left and right repeatedly in celebration. It was the Spanish driver's first win since the Canadian GP in June.

"(This win) was something I was thinking about from Canada and I didn't have the opportunity to do it," Alonso said.

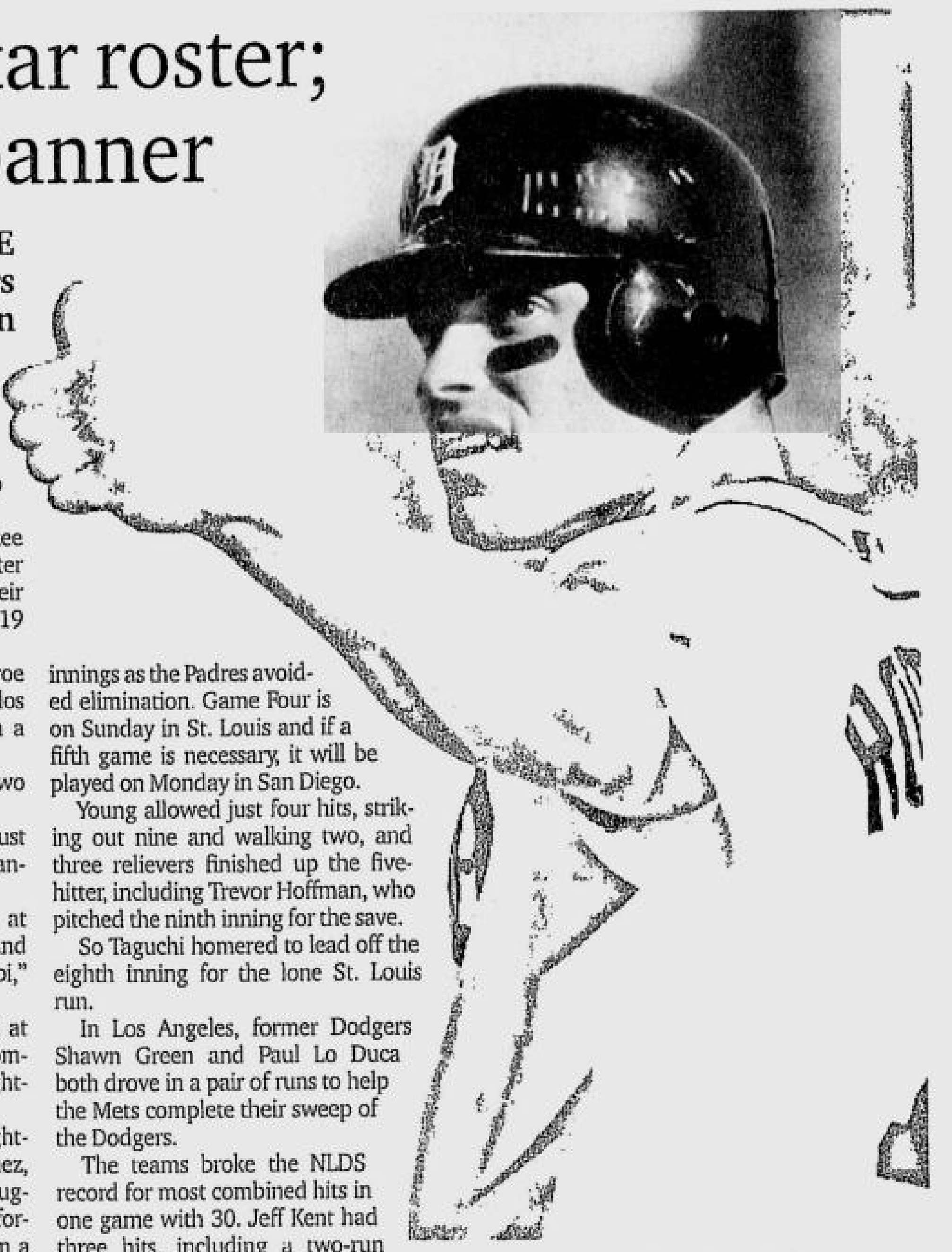
After completing his victory lap, Alonso jumped onto his car and imitated bird standing on one leg. He then he ran into an open area where he danced and did a spin before hugging nearly every blue-and-yellow teammate in sight.

The title race is now back in Alonso's hands. And while he needs only to score a point in the last race to clinch the title, no matter where Schumacher finishes, Alonso isn't taking anything for granted.

"I think it is a little too early, but for sure the same thing can happen in Brazil. For sure we are now in a much better position than before," he said. "Now we only need a few points and it becomes a bit easier." *AP*

Curtains fall on Yankees

Tigers tear apart all-star roster; Mets left to hoist NY banner



IVAN Rodriguez of the Detroit Tigers acknowledges the fans after the victory. AFP

DETROIT—JEREMY BONDERMAN SCATTERED FIVE hits over 8-1/3 stellar innings as the Detroit Tigers shocked the New York Yankees, 8-3, in the American League playoffs on Saturday.

Detroit won three straight games over the Yankees to capture the best-of-five series 3-1 and book a place against the Oakland Athletics in the AL Championship Series.

In Los Angeles, the New York Mets moved on to the National League Championship Series with a 9-5 win over the Dodgers, completing a three-game sweep of their NLDS.

In St. Louis, Russell Branyan had a two-run triple as the San Diego Padres stayed alive in their NLDS with a 3-1 win over the Cardinals, who lead that series, 2-1.

The Tigers ended the regular season with five straight losses to lose the AL Central title on the final day of the season to the Minnesota Twins, setting up a first round series against the powerful Yankees.

But the Yankees went 20 straight innings at one point in the series without scoring a single run and were held without a hit for the first five innings by Bonderman, who retired the first 15 batters he faced.

"They outplayed us and outpitched us and there's not much more you can say," Yankees manager Joe Torre said.

"They showed that great pitching can stop great hitting."

Bonderman allowed just two runs on five hits before leaving to a tumultuous ovation from the sold-out crowd of more than 43,000 fans at Comerica Park, who started celebrating when Jamie Walker got the final two outs to close out the game shortly after.

The Tigers peppered five Yankee pitchers for 13 hits and chased starter Jaret Wright after three innings in their first post-season appearance in 19 years.

Magglio Ordonez and Craig Monroe both homered for the Tigers and Carlos Guillen had three hits and drove in a run.

Ivan Rodriguez also drove in two runs for Detroit.

Tiger manager Jim Leyland was just happy to have seen the back of the Yankees.

"I'm glad not to have to look at (Derek) Jeter and (Bobby) Abreu and Johnny Damon and (Jason) Giambi," Leyland said.

"I'll be glad I don't have to look at them until next spring and that's a compliment. I mean, you can have nightmares."

The playoffs were once again a nightmare for New York star Alex Rodriguez, who continued his post-season struggles. The reigning AL MVP went 1-for-14 in the series and did not drive in a single run.

Chris Young pitched 6-2/3 shutout innings as the Padres avoided elimination. Game Four is on Sunday in St. Louis and if a fifth game is necessary, it will be played on Monday in San Diego.

Young allowed just four hits, striking out nine and walking two, and three relievers finished up the five-hitter, including Trevor Hoffman, who pitched the ninth inning for the save.

So Taguchi homered to lead off the eighth inning for the lone St. Louis run.

In Los Angeles, former Dodgers Shawn Green and Paul Lo Duca both drove in a pair of runs to help the Mets complete their sweep of the Dodgers.

The teams broke the NLDS record for most combined hits in one game with 30. Jeff Kent had three hits, including a two-run homer and James Loney drove in three runs for Los Angeles. *Reuters*

NEW YORK still has one team alive, thanks to the Mets, who celebrate after sweeping the Los Angeles Dodgers in the National League division series. REUTERS

Done, stunned and in denial

DETROIT—THEY WERE EMBARRASSED, not to mention angry with themselves, in a quiet clubhouse where the positive air that always filters in—in good times or in bad—was stifling in its absence.

There was a little denial, too.

"We still are the best team," said Johnny Damon after the Yankees lost to the Tigers, 8-3, and were knocked out of the American League Division Series in four games. "The best team doesn't always win."

The "best team" opinion was not on general manager Brian Cashman's lips.

Staring at the floor with a look of anguish, Cashman, who must answer to George Steinbrenner, responded, "We didn't earn the right to say that."

Down the hall, the champagne was flowing in the Tigers' clubhouse, with ear-popping noise coming from corks and the euphoria that overtook the room. Why not? David had just beaten Goliath.

Jeremy Bonderman followed Kenny Rogers's gem Friday night with one of his own yesterday afternoon at Comerica Park, as Detroit advanced to the American League Championship Series against Oakland.

"Bonder-ful!" read the message that flickered on the small message boards along the foul lines. And Bonderful it was. The 23-year-old righthander knew he couldn't let down a town that had been void of playoff baseball for 19 years. Not after he squandered a 6-0 lead against Kansas City in the regular-season finale to cost the Tigers the AL Central title and a celebration.

Bonderman had plenty of time to reflect on that game. "I wasn't going to let that happen tonight," said Bonderman. "The guys got me the lead and I wasn't going to give it back."

There was no giving back. He no-hit the Yankees for five innings, dominating them to leave the league's most expensive roster done and stunned. *NYT News Service*

Casamayor rubs salt on Corrales' wound

LAS VEGAS—DIEGO CORRALES couldn't beat Joel Casamayor or the scales.

Casamayor won the WBC lightweight title Saturday night with a split decision win over Corrales, who was forced to give up the belt a day earlier when he failed to make the 135-pound weight limit.

In a fight that almost didn't happen because Corrales couldn't make the weight, Casamayor scored the cleaner punches and more of them to win both the vacated title and the rubber match between the two fighters.

Casamayor won, 116-111, on one scorecard and 115-112 on a second. A third judge had Corrales ahead, 114-113. The Associated Press had Casamayor winning, 116-112.

"I know I won," Casamayor said. "But I was a little concerned when it went to the cards."

Corrales, who said he hadn't eaten for four days before weighing in at 139 pounds at Friday's weigh-in, started slow and never seemed to really find his range against the former Cuban Olympic champion.

"I thought I boxed really well," Corrales said. "How are you going to win running away?"

Casamayor frustrated Corrales from the opening round on, and even a disputed knockdown in the fifth round couldn't help Corrales overcome the crafty left-hander's style. He won the first three rounds on all three scorecards, a margin Corrales couldn't make up in the later rounds.

Referee Kenny Bayless ruled that Corrales knocked down Casamayor in the fifth round, but replays showed the two men merely got their feet mixed up. Casamayor got up immediately and spread his arms open in disbelief

"It wasn't a solid knockdown, but it was a knockdown," Corrales said. "The rules say if you put a guy down its a knockdown."

Corrales had to part with his $1.2 million payday to Casamayor so the fight would still go on after he didn't make the weight. He was also fined $240,000 by the Nevada Athletic Commission, and lost his WBC lightweight title before even stepping into the ring. *AP*

Valuev retains title with win over Barrett

ROSEMONT, ILLINOIS—UNDEFEATED NIKOLAI Valuev retained the WBA heavyweight championship Saturday night, stopping Monte Barrett in the 11th round.

The largest heavyweight champion ever, the 7-foot, 328-pound Valuev (45-0, 33 knockouts) knocked down Barrett twice in the 11th, and the fight was stopped 2:12 into the round after a left jab left the challenger glassy-eyed and staggering against the ropes.

"This victory wasn't easy," Valuev said. "Monte really tried hard. I knew after the fourth or fifth round I would win."

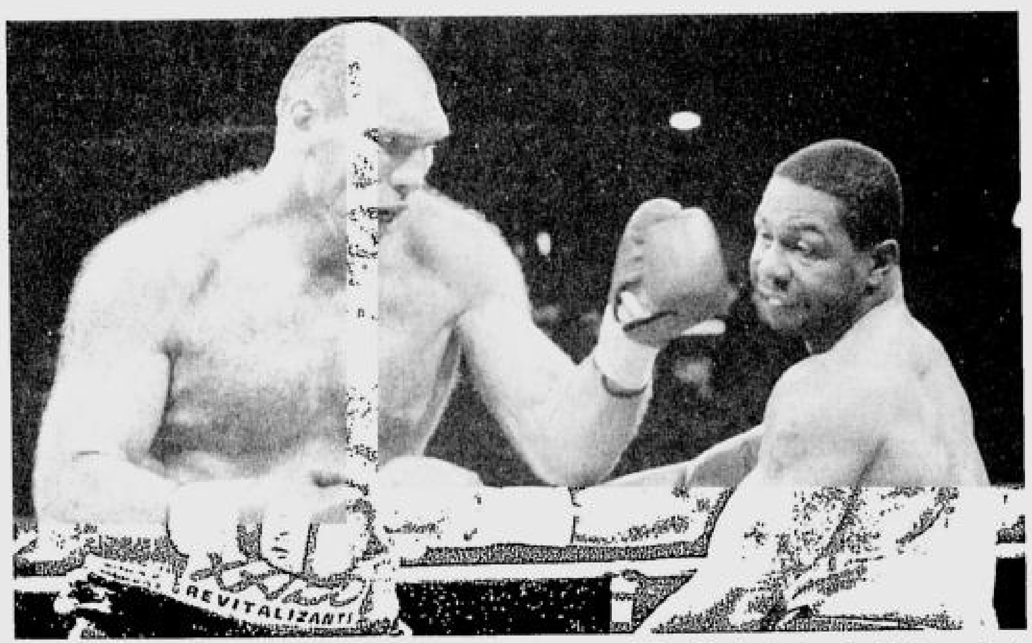
Valuev floored Barrett in the eighth and pounced on the challenger in the 11th after he tripped. Barrett (31-5) quickly found himself back on the canvas after being knocked down, but got up. He got up again after the second knockdown of the round.

Valuev continued the barrage, and the fight ended when trainer James Ali Basheer jumped into the ring.

After winning the belt on a disputed decision over John Ruiz in Berlin last December, Valuev stopped Jamaican challenger Owen Beck in the third round in Hanover, Germany, in June. The longest reigning heavyweight champion entering the bout, he was fighting for just the third time in the United States and making his first appearance in the country in more than five years.

As impressions go, this one was not bad.

Barrett, wearing pink gloves that will be auctioned to raise money for breast cancer charities, landed a solid left to the head in the fourth. Valuev's mouth was bleeding in the sixth.



NIKOLAI Valuev (left) lands a punch on Monte Barrett, of New York, during the first round of a WBA world heavyweight championship boxing match Saturday. AP

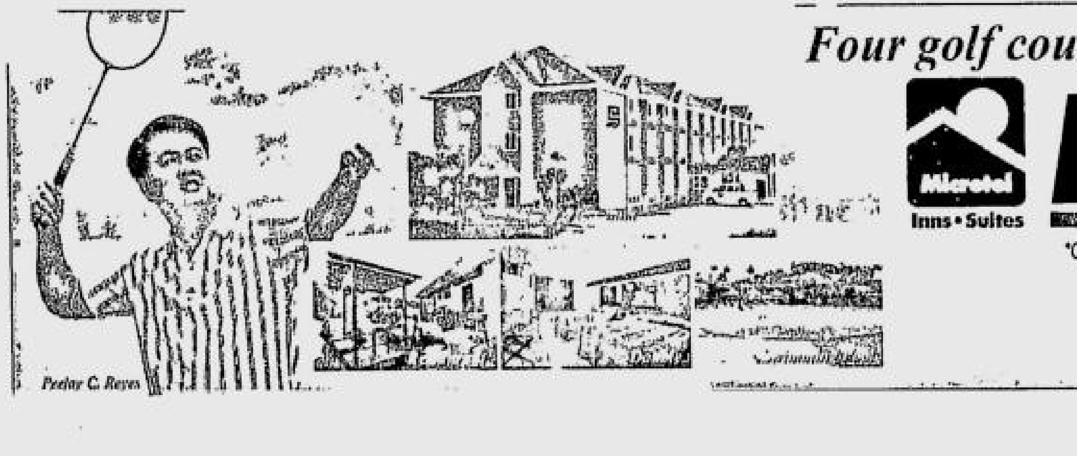
But most of the solid punches Barrett landed barely fazed Valuev.

The champion landed a solid jab in the seventh and caught Barrett with several rights as he tried to get away from the corner.

Barrett staggered into the ropes after a right in the eighth and went down for an eight count with about a minute left in the round after a left and right hook.

Barrett had not fought since a unanimous 12-round loss to his friend Hasim Rahman in a lackluster bout at the United Center in August 2005, and he had not fared well against tall fighters. He dropped a split decision to the 6-8 Lance Whitaker in 1999 and suffered a technical knockout against 6-6 Wladimir Klitschko in London the following year.

On Saturday, he was trying to break the former Soviet Union's monopoly on heavyweight championships—one that developed this year when Klitschko won the IBF belt, Sergei Liakhovich took the WBO titles and Oleg Maskaev claimed the WBC strap. *AP*



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Battle of Courts: Peregrine shuttlers shock Centro

By Jong Arcano

ONE TEAM SWEPT ALL OF ITS matches on the way to topping the opening leg of the Battle of the Courts badminton tournament—but it was not Centro Atletico.

Described by its owner as a team on a mission, Peregrine Manila defied the odds and crowned itself the first-leg winner after a superb performance capped by a 2-1 conquest of Centro Atletico in the finals at the Playground courts yesterday.

Mark Mayo and Violy Alipio delivered the clincher for Peregrine by turning back the Centro pair of Dan Astillero-Gina Flores in the mixed doubles after both teams had split the men's and ladies doubles duels.

With Alipio serving at 17-17, Peregrine won the last four points in a thrilling end to a leg punctuated by so many close matches.

Peregrine won, 21-16, 21-17.

"We're a team on a mission to prove that we can do better than our quarterfinals showing last year," said Peregrine owner Benhur Go.

Go initiated his team buildup six months ago, taking in Cebu players Gina Juan and Jessel Solivas plus Bingo Bonanza owner Ahlbee Benitez, and getting them to train under Indonesian coaches.

Juan and Solivas had a big hand in the Peregrine shocker, stopping Marife Durana-Beth Pulido, 21-18, 21-15, in ladies doubles to even up matters after the loss of teammates Erwin Santos and Richard Tan in the men's doubles, 21-17, 21-7.

The Battle of the Courts is presented by INQUIRER Badminton, Mizuno and Rush Fitness Water. It is also supported by Unilever, Duty Free Phils., BSI Medicated Spray and Gerflor Taraflex.

Peregrine completed a four-game sweep of its elimination-round games by beating PNP in the morning. It then defeated Alabang Racquet Club in the semifinals.

Centro, which saw its Battle of the Courts winning streak end at 15 matches, also topped its group by a sweep. It beat PNP in the Final Four to arrange a duel with Peregrine.

All four semifinalists advanced to next month's national finals.

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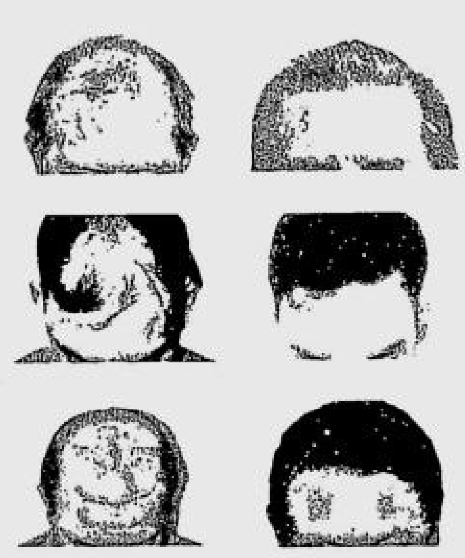

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MILO MARATHON ELIMS

Mahinay fastest in Zambo

ZAMBOANGA CITY—MAHINAY IS THE WORD for slow in these parts.

But Abelardo Mahinay, a first-time participant from Universidad de Zamboanga, proved he's not what his name connotes in topping the elimination race of the 30th National Milo Marathon yesterday.

Despite a recent bout with the flu, the 19-year-old Criminology student pulled away at the 12-kilometer mark of the 21K race to finish with a time of one hour, eight minutes and 12 seconds.

Placing second and third were 34-year-old Rolando Costa (1:08:58) and 25-year-old Jefrey Quipao (1:09:36), who also made it with Mahinay to the national finals slated Dec. 10 in Metro Manila.

"I started training for the race two months ago but I got sick last week," Mahinay said in Filipino. "I started jogging only last Oct. 5."

Topping the distaff race was another student from Universidad de Zamboanga and also a rookie—Mary Grace delos Santos.

Delos Santos led all the way in clocking 1:29:45 for the race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, Adidas, Cebu Pacific, Department of Tourism and Powerbar.

357
MILO
FINISH LINE
MILO

ABELARDO Mahinay crosses the finish line in Zamboanga City's Joaquin Enriquez Sports Complex.

Placing second, two minutes and nine seconds behind Delos Santos, a Commerce student, was her cousin and schoolmate Mary Joy.

The cousins have yet to compete in the 42K full marathon but vowed to train well for the Metro Manila finale in December.

The Tahil siblings dominated the shorter distance races.

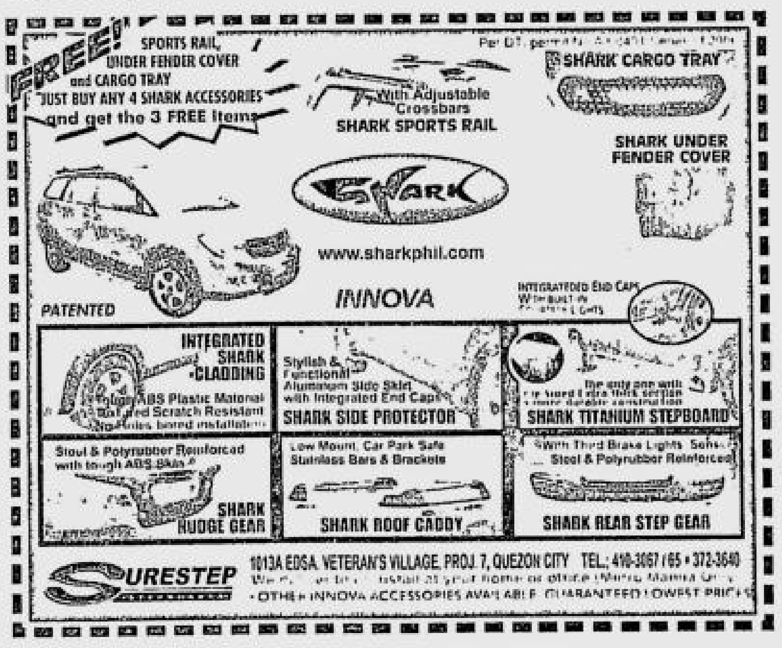
Radjeev topped the men's 5K race, Frasser and Jurist scored a 1-2 finish in the boys' 6-9 years 3K race, Hannika ruled the girls' 10-12 3K run, and Nisha placed eighth in the women's 5K event.

Ten-year-old Gainzly would have won the boys' 10-12 event but was disqualified at the finish line due to a technicality. He lost his turnaround ribbon on his way back to the Joaquin Enriquez Sports Complex.

The other winners were Krisha Sardenia in the 3K girls' 6-9 age group, Jerico Bayhon in the 3K boys' 10-12 and Rogelyn Villarta in the 5K female race.

Mayor Celso Lobregat fired the gun that sent off more than 3,500 runners.

Next week, the country's biggest and longest-running foot race goes to Dagupan City.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World Citi cagebelles force WNCAA do-or-die match

WORLD CITI COLLEGES LEANED ON THE hot shooting of Callie Pangilinan to get back at Miriam College, 74-70, yesterday to send the WNCAA Senior B basketball finals into a rubber match at the St. Scholastica gym.

Pangilinan led all scorers with 23 points with Eva Sampan and Leolyn Cortez chipping in 16 markers each as World Citi stayed alive after absorbing a 70-44 whipping in Game 1.

Katrina Escali paced Miriam with 19 points.

The do-or-die third game is set on Saturday also at the St. Scho gym.

The Senior A finals between Lyceum and College of St. Benilde is still being played at press time with the Lady Pirates seeking the title after winning Game 1 in overtime, 42-40.

In the juniors Final Four, eliminations topnotcher Miriam clinched the first finals seat with an 86-51 shellacking of No. 4-ranked San Beda College Alabang.

No. 3 seed Chiang Kai Shek College forced a playoff by beating No. 2 De La Salle Zobel, 62-54.

INQUIRER TV GUIDE Monday, October 9, 2006

ABC
Philippine Idol
Sabado 9
Linggo 9

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Nickelodeon				Mon Cole Knight	Legend Of Shaolin Kung Fu	TNA Wrestling		Big News	Global Shockers		Totoo TV		Philippine Idol	Sentro	The Apprentice		Letty La Mas Fea [illegible] Dodie Cara(rerun)	
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Yakitate! Japan	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Pangako Sa 'Yo	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Super Inggo	Bituing Walang Ningning	Crazy For You		Pinoy Dream Academy	Bandila	[illegible]	Mirada De Mujer
AXN								Beastmaster		Max Exposure (Season 1)									
bTV				Sidelines: L.A. Hoops		NBA Inside Stuff	NBA Europe Live 2006					2006 Champs League San Beda vs. NU-G5				2006 Champs League ADU vs. VSPT - G6			
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	Dexter's Laboratory	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Max Steel/ My Gym Partner's A Monkey	Bobobo/ Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	Mirumo De Pon	Pokemon: The Johto Journey	The Justirisers	Shaman King	Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	The Simpsons	Aqua Teen Hunger Force	Gundam Seed	Shaman King
Cinema One		Tinik Sa Dibdib				Linlang				Batas Ng Lansangan				Hindi Mo Ako Kayang Tapakan				Premonition	
Cinemax					The Shadow (4:20 PM)				Witch Hunt (6:20 PM)			Komodo Vs. Cobra			With Deadly Intent (9:15 PM)			Once Upon A Time In Mexico	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Living Golf/Living Golf/Asian Sail/Art Of Life		Your World Today	
Crime/Suspense		What Should You Do?		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Masterminds	Law & Order		Law & Order Special Victims Unit		Law Firm		Prison Break		Treasure Hunters	
Discovery Channel				Monster Garage		Ultimate Discovery		Deadliest Catch		Wild Discovery		Life Unlimited		Ultimate Discovery				Deadliest Catch	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Black Hole High	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		Extreme Programming Sports Max 2006/07		UEFA Champions League Magazine Show	Cheerleading	Table Tennis '03 Killerspin	Motorsport Asia	NFL Football: Steelers @ Chargers						Sportscenter Asia	Major League Baseball Division Series				
ETC	Friends	Beauty And The Geek		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Project Runway 2		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		America's Next Top Model 5		ET Weekend	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (DeGeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	The Biggest Loser 2		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Benediction And Devotion	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	G.K. Chesterton The Apostle Of Common Sense II	Threshold Of Hope		Sunday Night With (Encore) Fr Benedict Groeschel		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	Good Or Evil, Who Decides?	The Catholic Church Through The Ages	Freedom & Authority	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Atlantika		Bakekang (8:50 PM)	Love Story In Harvard	Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
Hallmark Channel				Judging Amy		Sue Thomas F.B. Eye		McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Just Cause		Judging Amy		Elizabeth			
HBO		Soccer Dog: The Movie			The World Accdg To Garp					Blade Trinity				The Accidental Tourist				Entourage 21: Exodus	Entourage 22: The Abyss
Hero TV	Rune Soldier	Sunny Pig	Last Exile	Mirmo de Pon	Sugar, A Little Snow Fairy	Naruto	Inuyasha	Saiyuki Reload	Full Metal Panic	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	Transformers Armada	Last Exile	Fortune Quest	B-Daman Bakugaiden V	Beyblade G-Revolution	Ganbaruger	Rune Soldier	Yu-Gi-Oh GX
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Kousada Kontra Krimen		Japan Video Topics/ Arts		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arts	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		Bottomline		Afterburn		Cinema Tech	Evolver	Beat The Geeks	Street Smarts	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Jack Yard	Jack's Booth				The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	Embellish This	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Intimate Portrait	E! Extra: 101 Craziest TV Moments			Martha		Isaac		Radical Sabbatical	Genuine Article
MTV Philippines		MTV Hits	8th & Ocean		Wildboyz	8th & Ocean	MTV Hits			Get Spotted	World Trade Center Movie Special	TRL		Wildboyz	8th & Ocean	Diary Of Sean Paul	Jams	VH1 All Access: Celebrity Best Friends	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXlog	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mobile MYX Top Picks		Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXlog
National Geographic		Africa's Secret Seven		Naked Science		The Living Edens		ShowReel Asia S3		Protecting The President		About Asia		Inside The Pentagon		The Living Edens		Wild Sex	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alas			Dyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Kapihan Ng Bayan			Tinig ng Bayan (Live)	Teledyaryo Final Edition		Dial M		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles (Filipino)	In Focus	Euromaxx	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Dating Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		News Beat (Live)		OpenLine Live	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	Ang Mga Nagsi-Alis Sa Dating Daan		Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	In Focus	DWTV Journal News	Euromaxx
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	Naturally Sadie	Romeo	SpongeBob SquarePants	My Life As A Teenage Robot	Danny Phantom	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	SpongeBob SquarePants	The Fairly Odd Parents	All That	Romeo	As Told By Ginger	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Working Boys				Huwag Kang Lumimot				Like Father Like Son				Hindi Mo Ako Kayang Tapakan				Paloma
Qtv	Starry Starry Night	Shaman King	Battle B-Daman	BB Daman Bakugaiden	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Winter Sonata	Irene	Emperor Of The Sea	Takeshi's Castle		H3O Hahaha...Over!		News On Q	Sapulso		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Complete Savages	Jake In Progress	Scare Tactics	GBB	Movie Monday				Newswatch Now	Go Negosyo		Kapihan
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports						WNCAA		Billiards: WC Pool		Sagupaan		Spanish League				Sportsdesk		NFL Game	
Star Movies		The Truth About Love			3 Ninjas			The Thin Red Line (6:10 PM)						My Favorite Martian			The Grudge		
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons		Star News Asia	Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids	Everybody Loves Raymond	Yes Dear		For Better Or Worse		Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids
Studio 23		Yu-Gi-Oh				Batman Beyond	Dragon Booster	Blog	Pinoy Dream Academy	Wazzup Wazzup						News Central	America's Next Top Model		Travel Time

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Gov't woos US firm on $1-B expansion

IN THIS ISSUE

- **Tax** collection up in six cities /B6
- **Rice** imports seen to decline in 2007 /B14

High power cost a major drawback

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AMERICAN SEMICONDUCTOR GIANT TEXAS Instruments, one of the country's top exporters, is considering a $1-billion investment in an additional factory and the government's investment promotion agencies are scrambling to beat China and convince the firm to locate here.

Armand C. Arreza, chief executive of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, said the semiconductor firm needed 20 to 30 hectares for a "sister plant" of its facility in the Baguio City economic zone.

"They expect to make a decision within the year," Arreza said. "The Board of Investments, the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and Clark Development Corp. are helping court TI."

"TI has no more room to expand in the Baguio ecozone," the SBMA administrator added. "A technical team from TI is expected to visit Subic this week."

Arreza said TI intended to build a redundant plant for backup purposes considering that its output in Baguio represented two-fifths of the American firm's global sales.

He said the company was mainly concerned about electricity costs, for which it was spending some $2 million or about P100 million a month.

Arreza said TI's concern would be addressed when Taiwan Cogeneration Corp.'s planned 300-

GOV'T/ B4

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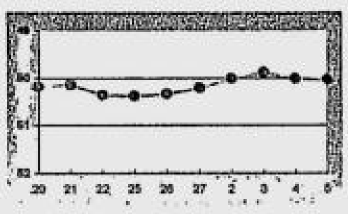

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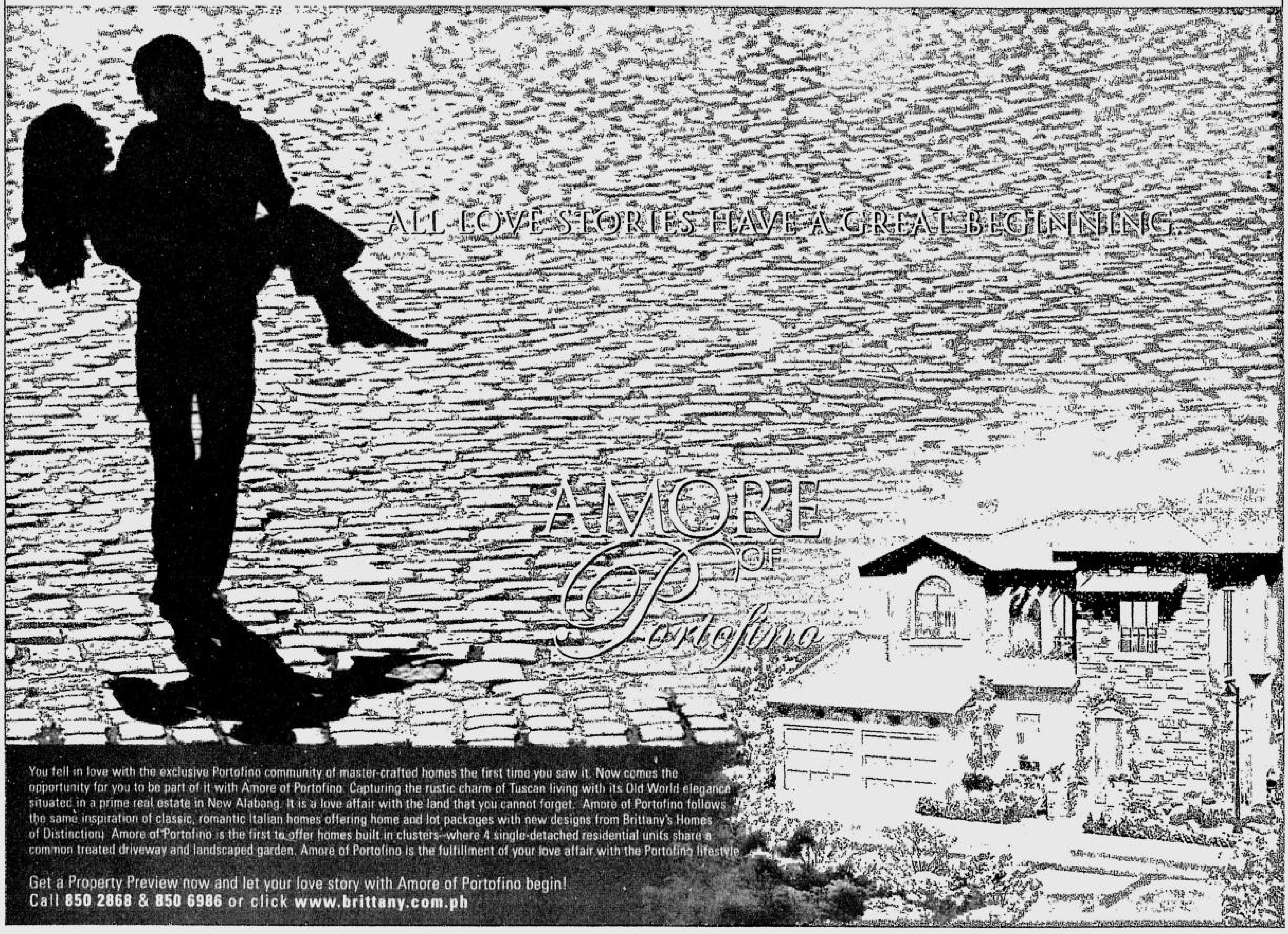
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The Clusters Of Amore:
Offering A New Lifestyle Concept In Residential Living

Amore of Portofino, the new 11-hectare enclave in the exclusive Portofino community of New Alabang, introduces the concept of "Clusters". This harks back to Amore of Portofino's Tuscan influence, where warmth and camaraderie is established among neighbors without sacrificing privacy.

In a cluster, 4 single-detached residential units share a common treated driveway. The driveway becomes exclusive to the owners of these residential units. Two clusters will share its own landscaped pocket garden that adds charm to the place.

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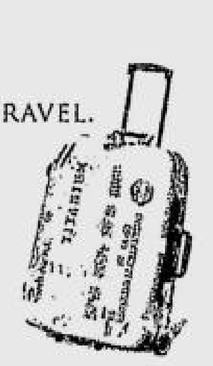

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IMF cautions gov't on quality of public expenditures

Warns against spending coursed through GOCCs

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL MONETARY Fund has raised concern on the government's tack to resort to some "off-budget" activities as a means to catch up on huge infrastructure and social spending bottlenecks.

In a draft report by the IMF mission following the latest Post-Program Monitoring on the Philippines, the fund warned that off-budget spending—such as those coursed through government-owned and -controlled corporations—might infringe on the quality of public expenditures.

But it agreed on the pressing need to channel gains from the value-added tax to boost social services and infrastructure, areas where the Philippines had large unfulfilled requirements.

"Revenues have performed strongly in 2006 to date, creating room for higher social spending," the IMF said, citing the bigger-than-expected decline in the national government deficit as a result of underspending.

The IMF acknowledged that the implementation of the higher spending for 2006 was being frustrated by the impasse over the budget as well as by apparent procurement delays. Recently, Congress approved a P46-billion supplemental budget to accelerate much needed public spending.

"The authorities are also attempting to increase infrastructure spending through a special P10-billion National Development Co. bond issue, the proceeds of which would be on-lent to GOCCs," the report said.

"(IMF) staff questioned whether such off-budget activities might detract from the quality of expenditure," the report said, although it noted that the government had assured that all new projects were part of the medium-term public investment plan.

Despite these efforts, the IMF estimated that national government spending was likely to fall

IMF/ B3

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IMF cautions . . .

From page B2

short of program by about half a percent of gross domestic product in 2006. It also projected that the increase in GOCC spending would be "fairly limited."

The IMF supported the government's plans to balance the budget but underscored the importance of the adjustment being sustainable.

"A durable fiscal adjustment would require raising revenue rather than compressing expenditure, which until the recent (National Power Corp.) power hikes and VAT reform, had been the principal means used to contain the fiscal deficit," it said.

Based on estimates from the National Economic and Development Authority, the Philippines needs P1.1 trillion ($21.25 billion) in fresh investments from this year to 2010 to unclog infrastructure bottlenecks in line with the medium-term Philippine development plan (MTPDP).

Documents presented by Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri to the global donor community during the Philippine Development Forum in March estimated the cost of investments needed to shore up the country's vital transportation, power, water, communications and social infrastructure in the next five years.

The total investments needed, equivalent to about 2.87-3.14 percent of GDP, included vital projects inside and outside the MTPDP amounting to P540.21 billion and P548.47 billion.

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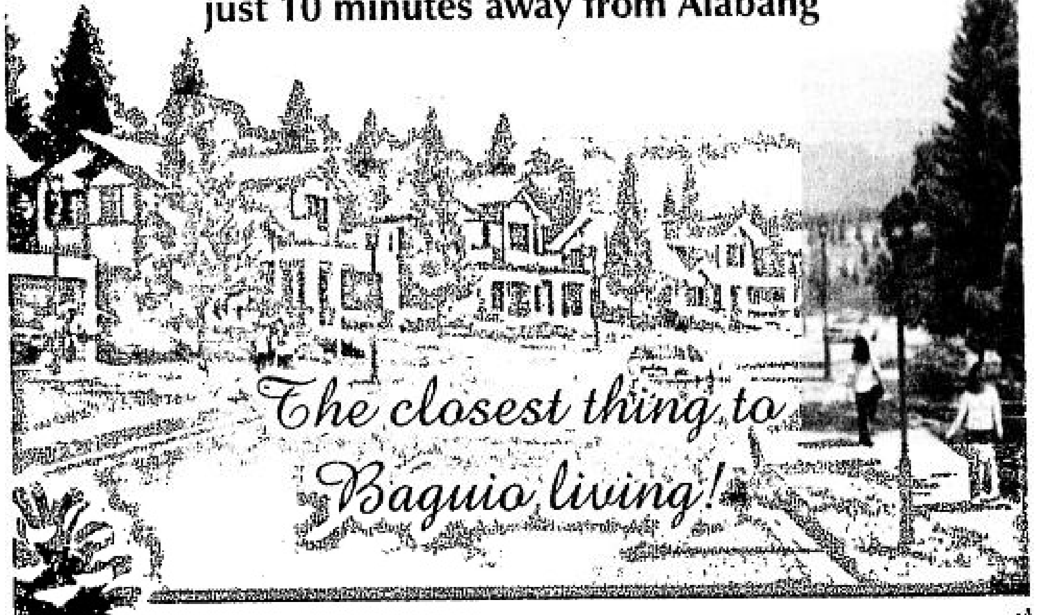
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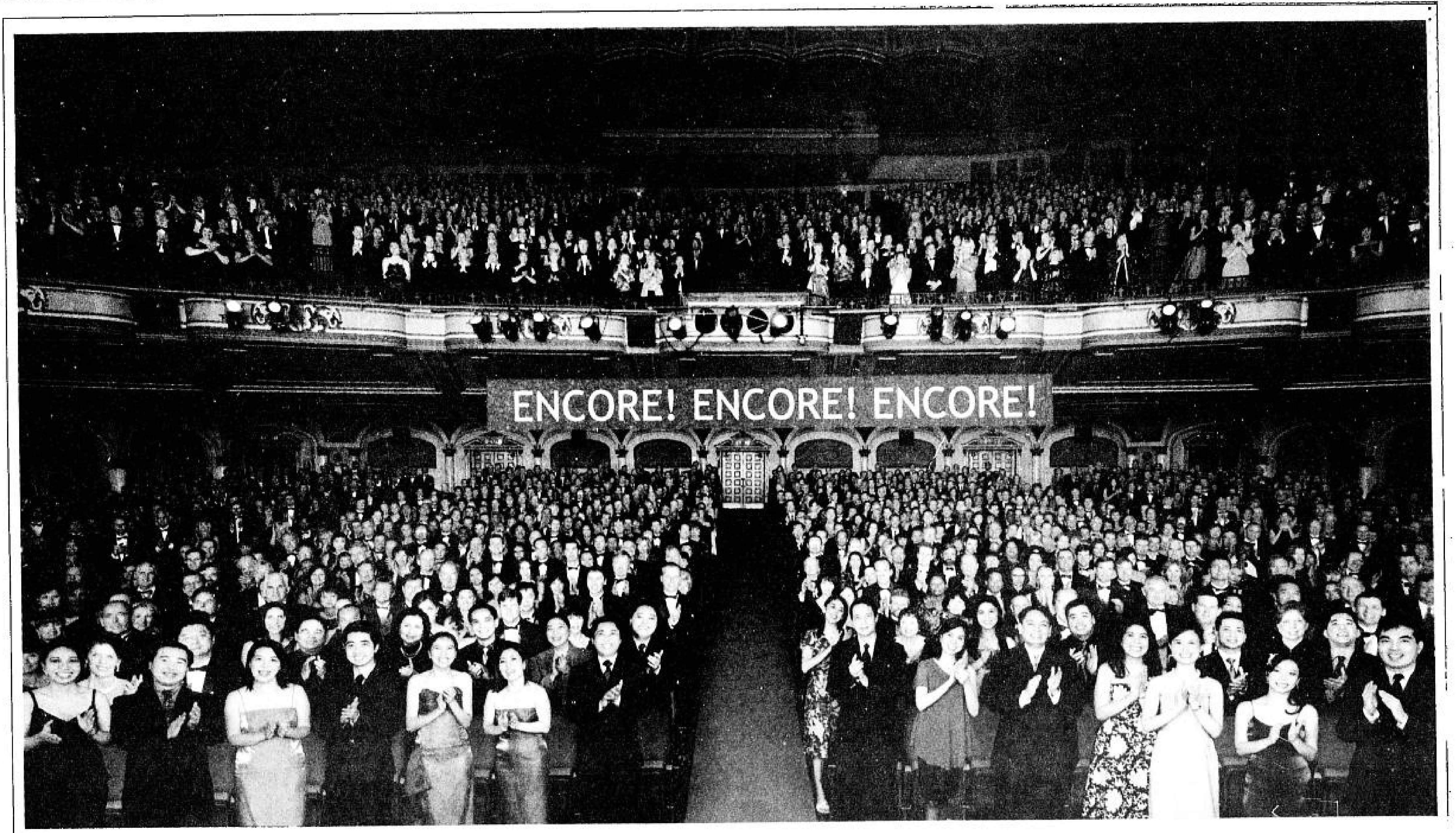
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British insurance firm remains bullish on RP, Asia

By Doris C. Dumlao

BRITISH FINANCIAL GIANT PRUdential Plc is bullish on the Philippines and the booming Asian region, shrugging off the impact of sporadic political upheavals in some countries on its appetite to expand in the world's fastest growing region.

Prudential Group CEO Mark Tucker, who was visiting from London, said in a briefing Friday that 10 years after setting up the Philippine unit Pru Life UK, the British insurer was looking at a stronger growth in the years ahead.

"We'd seen enormous potential in the Philippine economy and tremendous opportunities," Tucker said. "The last 10 years had been an excellent start. It's a tremendous platform to build further growth on."

He noted that the Philippines was an important part of the group's robust Asian operations, although there was more room to increase penetration.

Pru Life is now the country's fourth biggest life insurer in terms of business volume with a market share of about 6 percent.

In the Philippine market, the penetration rate of the entire insurance industry was estimated at only about 18-20 percent of the population.

"Penetration is still relatively low but the economy is coming on a strong position. Consumer behavior at the moment is not strong but it's turning, so (given) all those factors we're optimistic about growth in the Philippines," Tucker said.

"We have been a leader in product innovation. We have been a leader in systems and we expect to continue. On that basis, we have a good start but we need to go from very good to great," he stressed.

The Prudential Group, whose main market used to be Europe and the Americas, is now generating a big business out of Asia. In every market where it is operating, local business always ranks among the top three players.

"We have 23 operations in 12 countries (in Asia) and the Philippines is an important part of that. And we look to where the potential is and we view that in the Philippines, there remains significant potential to grow the business. We remain as excited, more excited today than we were 10 years ago," Tucker said.

Pru Life fast-tracked its growth at the turn of the decade by acquiring the operations of All State Insurance in 2001 and ING Life in 2002. The life insurer has also outpaced the industry's volume growth over the years at about 25-30 percent over the last 10 years.

Asked whether Pru Life would likely make more acquisitions in the Philippines, Tucker said: "I think we look the whole time at all organic and inorganic opportunities and our single criteria is value added. If we think there's value in doing it, we'll look at it but there's no current discussion going on."

In a bid to increase its market share, Pru Life UK is also moving to penetrate other market segments aside from the high-end market by developing more alternative marketing facilities. Specifically, the foreign insurer, which has focused on the high-end market in the past, would like to corner a chunk of the lower-income market.

Beginning next year, Pru Life UK plans to open more general agencies and branches in and out of Metro Manila.

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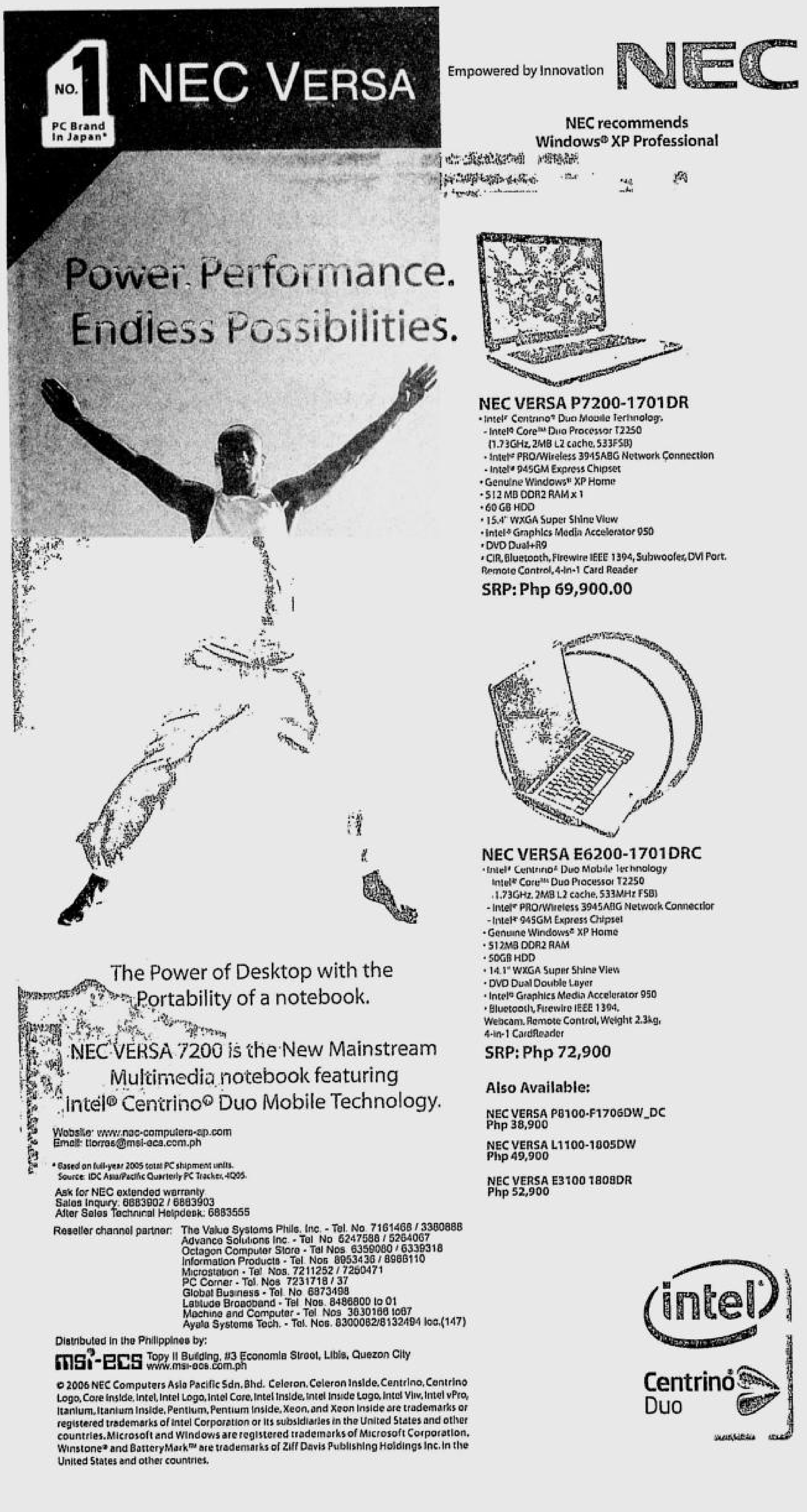

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Puzzles, contradictions, ironies

NO FREE LUNCH

Cielito F. Habito

RECENT ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE DATA reveal a number of apparent contradictions, some of which are downright puzzling, and some which are disturbingly ironic.

These come out of the fact that as always, there is a mix of good news and bad news which when taken together, don't seem to add up or make sense.

In my most recent economic briefings, I highlight seven such apparent puzzles. I focus on three here.

Growth and employment

The first and most telling contradiction is the way that the respectable 5.5-percent growth of the economy in the second quarter of 2006 was accompanied by a worsening of unemployment, which rose from 7.7 percent last year to 8 percent this year.

Data show 928,000 new job-seekers joining the workforce over the past year. However, only 735,000 net new jobs were created by the growing economy, adding almost 200,000 to the ranks of the unemployed, who now number close to three million.

These numbers tell us that for our economy, a 5.5-percent overall growth rate is simply not good enough. In recent periods, the growth has been coming from less job-creating (i.e. less labor-intensive) sectors like finance, communication and mining.

But the sectors that tend to create more jobs as they grow include agriculture, construction and manufacturing.

Job-eating growth?

This leads me to another contradiction in the recent data that seems to be a real puzzle. Agriculture actually was the star performer in the second-quarter data, posting a 6.7-percent improvement, well above that sector's average performance over the past years.

And yet, official data show that the sector actually lost a hefty 149,000 jobs over the past year. This suggests that not only did the sector have what economists now call a jobless growth; it even had a job-eating growth!

The usual explanation for this seeming contradiction would be increased mechanization and use of labor-saving technologies.

So I checked the data to see if there was indeed more mechanization in the sector. But lo and behold, detailed investment data showed that investments in farm machinery and tractors actually fell by 35 percent and 10 percent respectively! So it cannot be that.

Painful irony

If it's not farm mechanization that brought about this job-eating growth, could it be higher-yielding hybrid seeds? Well, maybe—especially since corn and palay, the focus of the government's hybrid seed program, led the growth of the sector with 49 and 10 percent, respectively.

But there is a painful irony here, if this is indeed the explanation.

While hybrid seeds may be succeeding in producing more rice and corn for Filipinos to eat, close to a million (that is, 149,000 new jobless farm workers times an average of six family members) additional rural dwellers out there are now unable to eat decently due to unemployment and poverty.

No wonder the SWS hunger index reached a record high of 17 percent earlier this year.

Lesson for DA

There is a real challenge to our agriculture authorities here. It is important to remember that our goal for the sector is not merely to increase agricultural production; it is ultimately to improve the welfare of farm families. The success of the Department of Agriculture should not be measured on the basis of farm output alone; that is not an end in itself. Ultimately, it is people that matter.

While consumers in general benefit from increased farm output, and presumably lower food prices, we need to find a way to ensure that farm dwellers are not left behind. And here, many were not only left behind; they were even pushed deeper into poverty with the loss of jobs.

Our legislators need to keep this in mind as well. While right-thinking agriculture officials understand that there is more to their mission than raising farm output, I hear them lament that congressmen grilling them on their budget appear to be fixated on production levels, especially of crops dominant in their respective districts.

Confidence crisis

A third major contradiction in the data concerns how overall investment fell by a hefty 5.8 percent, while foreign direct investment inflows were reported by the Bangko Sentral to have jumped by 53.5 percent!

This tells us that the drop in investment by Filipinos themselves was much steeper than suggested by the already bad decline in overall investment. The fact is, total investment has been dropping for the last six quarters, and has gotten worse with a deeper drop in the latest report.

An irony, it seems, but foreigners seem to have more confidence in us than we do ourselves. Do the foreign investors know something that Filipino investors don't? Or is it the other way around—they don't know something their Filipino counterparts do?

Whichever way it is, there is nothing short of a crisis of confidence in the Philippine economy, particularly from those more intimately familiar with the domestic economic and political scene. And this confidence crisis is not helped by recent policy reversals and flip-flopping from the Palace.

Our most urgent need is to arrest this seeming freefall in our investment levels—and it will take much more than economic instruments to do that. *Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu*

Gov't woos US firm . . .

From page B1

megawatt, coal-fired power plant project pushed through.

He said Taiwan Cogen's project would help push power rates in the freeport lower and nearer to the regional benchmark of competitive prices that were attractive to investors.

The official added that power costs were also hoped to be lowered through a petition for a 35-centavo-per-kWh reduction pending with the Energy Regulatory Commission.

Arreza said Subic power rates could be slashed to as low as P5 a kWh or about 10 US cents (which would make it the cheapest in the country) but would still be higher than the competitive benchmark of 7 US cents for the region.

A site for the power plant and another for TI's factory—the remaining land in the second phase of Subic Bay Industrial Park—have both been identified, he said.

TI had recently started operation of a $27-million facility in Baguio City, the fourth in a string of expansion projects. The three-story facility accounts for a total floor area of 200,000 square feet and could add about 300 workers.

TI makes digital signal processors that are used in cellular phones and other electronic devices to help convert analog signals into the digital language of computers.

$65M needed to fill biofuel demand

By Abigail L. Ho

THE LOCAL biodiesel industry will need $65 million in additional investments to ensure it can meet the demand that the passage of the pending biofuels bill is expected to produce.

In a presentation before various foreign chambers in the country, former Energy Undersecretary Jose Victor Emmanuel de Dios, now with consultancy firm Merritt Energy, said the $65-million investment would be needed to put up biodiesel facilities with a total capacity of 306 million liters by 2011.

If additional investments could be raised, he said the current in-country biodiesel production capacity of 126 million liters a year could be jacked up to 161 million liters a year by 2009, 167 million liters a year by 2010 and 432 million liters a year by 2011.

The Philippine National Oil Co. Alternative Fuels Corp. (PNOC-AFC) last month signed a memorandum of understanding with Korean firm Samsung Corp. for an P8.2-billion jatropha facility and refinery project, involving a 120,000-hectare jatropha plantation worth P6 billion, and a 200,000-metric ton biodiesel refinery worth P2.23 billion.

The state firm is also currently in talks with two entities, an American firm and local biodiesel producer Chemrez Inc., for similar agreements.

In an earlier interview, PNOC-AFC president Peter Anthony Abaya said the state firm was working on memoranda of understanding for 400,000-MT biodiesel plants with each of the two firms.

Apart from biodiesel, De Dios said there were also a lot of investment opportunities in the area of bioethanol production as the industry needed $460 million worth of investments to meet projected demand up to 2010.

He said the $460-million investment would be enough to put up ethanol refineries with an aggregate capacity of 471 million liters a year by 2010.

If investors could infuse this amount in the local industry from this year onwards, he said in-country ethanol production capacity could reach 220 million liters a year by 2008, 228 million liters a year by 2009, and 471 million liters a year by 2010.

Investments on top of the $460 million, he said, could jack up ethanol refining capacity to 488 million liters a year by 2011 and 505 million liters a year by 2012.

The pending Biofuels Bill is expected to create a market for biodiesel and bioethanol, as it will mandate the use of a 1-percent coco methyl ester (CME) blend for diesel and a 5 to 10-percent ethanol blend for gasoline.

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WARRANTY

METROBANK
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VISAYAS/MINDANAO PROPERTIES
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★ Auction on October 23, 2006, (Monday) DYNASTY HOTEL, Tiano-Hayes St., Cagayan de Oro (near San Agustin Cathedral) 2:00 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M. (REGISTRATION STARTS AT 2:00 P.M. / AUCTION PROPER STARTS AT 3:00 P.M.)

★★ Auction on October 25, 2006, (Wednesday) Penthouse Metrobank Davao Center, Ramon Magsaysay Avenue, Davao City 2:00 P.M. TO 6:00 P.M. (REGISTRATION STARTS AT 2:00 P.M. / AUCTION PROPER STARTS AT 3:00 P.M.)

VISAYAS

*AKLAN
Text 09206186282

MB_AKL051 RSDL LOT
L.A. 943 sqm.
Brgy. Andagao, KALIBO
Min. Bid Price: P 1,280,000

MB_AKL052 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 150 sqm. F.A. 46 sqm.
OLIVE PLAINS SUBD., Numancia
Min. Bid Price: P 200,000

*ANTIQUE
Text 09206186282

MB_ATQ053 LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 943 sqm. F.A.
Sitio Punda, Brgy. Dalipe, SAN JOSE
Min. Bid Price: P 390,000

*BACOLOD
Text 09214488869

MB_BAC054 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 3,315 sqm. F.A. 384 sqm.
Lot 831, BRGY. SUM-AG
Min. Bid Price: P 3,800,000

MB_BAC055 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 250 sqm. F.A. 135 sqm.
ALUNAN AVE., Brgy. 35
Min. Bid Price: P 480,000

MB_BAC056 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 252 sqm. F.A. 155 sqm.
Emerald St., SAN LUIS VILL., Brgy. Sum-ag
Min. Bid Price: P 680,000

*CAPIZ
Text 09206186282

MB_CPZ057 RSDL/COMML LOT W/ IMPRVT.
L.A. 1,621 sqm.
McKinley St., ROXAS CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 6,970,300

*CEBU
Text 09266256957

MB_CBU058 RSDL LOT
L.A. 613 sqm.
ALTA VISTA SUBD., Pardo
Min. Bid Price: P 2,400,000

MB_CBU059 RSDL LOT
L.A. 8,017 sqm.
Brgy. Canjulao, LAPU-LAPU CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 2,280,000

*ILOILO
Text 09206186282

MB_ILO060 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 357 sqm. F.A. 280 sqm.
Gumban St., Brgy. Purok 1, PAVIA
Min. Bid Price: P 600,000

MB_ILO061 RSDL LOT
L.A. 504 sqm.
LEDESCO VILL., Brgy. Cubay, Jaro
Min. Bid Price: P 800,000

MB_ILO062 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,020 sqm. F.A. 1,155 sqm.
CD HEIGHTS SUBD., Mandurriao
Min. Bid Price: P 2,000,000

*LEYTE
Text 09266256957

MB_LYT063 LOT W/ IMPRVT
L.A. 1,300 sqm. F.A.
Brgy. San Jose, TACLOBAN CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 800,000

MB_LYT064 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 515 sqm. F.A. 168 sqm.
Brgy. Caibaan, TACLOBAN CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 580,000

MB_LYT065 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,092 sqm. F.A. 192 sqm.
Brgy. San Jose, TACLOBAN CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 650,000

MB_LYT066 RSDL LOT
L.A. 2,852 sqm.
Diversion Rd., Brgy. Caibaan
TACLOBAN CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 2,850,000

MB_LYT067 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 585 sqm. F.A. 180 sqm.
Taguile St., V&G SUBD.
Brgy. Caibaan, Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 1,350,000

MB_LYT068 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 240 sqm. F.A. 262 sqm.
ALANDE SUBD, Brgy. 78
Marasbaras, Tacloban City
Min. Bid Price: P 330,000

MB_LYT069 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 200 sqm. F.A. 120 sqm.
M. Moraza Street
Brgy. Greforio Loreto Sr., BAYBAY
Min. Bid Price: P 600,000

*NEGROS OCCIDENTAL
Text 09214488869

MB_NO070 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 645 sqm. F.A. 169 sqm.
Brgy. Recreo, PONTEVEDRA
Min. Bid Price: P 280,000

MB_NO071 2-STRY OFC-BLDG
Poblacion, SAN CARLOS CITY

LOT AREA	FLOOR AREA	Min. Bid Price
658 sqm.		P 500,000
1,685 sqm.	1,026 sqm.	P 5,500,000
1,820 sqm.	717 sqm	P 8,000,000

*SAMAR
Text 09266256957

MB_SMR072 WAREHOUSE BLDG.
L.A. 1,536 sqm. F.A. 540 sqm.
Baltimore St., JPR SUBD.
Poblacion, Calbayog City
Min. Bid Price: P 3,980,000

MB_SMR073 RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,535 sqm.
Brgy. Matobato, CALBAYOG CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 1,500,000

MINDANAO

*AGUSAN DEL SUR

MB_ADS074 RSDL LOT
L.A. 633 sqm.
Sanchez & Layna St., Poblacion
SAN FRANCISCO
Min. Bid Price: P 280,000

MB_ADS075 RSDL LOT
L.A. 862 sqm.
Brgy. Pisaan, SAN FRANCISCO
Min. Bid Price: P 140,000

MB_ADS076 RSDL LOT
L.A. 720 sqm.
Brgy. Pisaan, SAN FRANCISCO
Min. Bid Price: P 115,000

MB_ADS077 RSDL LOT
L.A. 6,291 sqm. F.A. 2,353 sqm.
May-as St., BRGY. 1, SAN FRANCISCO
Min. Bid Price: P 300,000

MB_ADS078 2 STRY. HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 601 sqm. F.A.
Tumulak St., Brgy. 2, SAN FRANCISCO
Min. Bid Price: P 350,000

*BUKIDNON
Text 09217388885

MB_BKN079 COMML BLDG.
L.A. 520 sqm. F.A. 565 sqm.
Brgy. Salawagan, QUEZON
Min. Bid Price: P 850,000

MB_BKN080 RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,095 sqm.
Brgy. Linabo, MALAYBALAY CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 200,000

MB_BKN081 RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,277 sqm.
Brgy. Managok, MALAYBALAY CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 160,000

MB_BKN082 RSDL LOT
L.A. 3,099 sqm.
Villa Hermosa Road., VALENCIA CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 780,000

MB_BKN083 RSDL LOT
L.A. 551 sqm.
Brgy. Hagkol, VALENCIA CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 250,000

*BUTUAN

MB_BTN084 6 STRY. HOTEL
L.A. 454 sqm. F.A. 2,070 sqm.
MONTILLA BLVD., Butuan City
Min. Bid Price: P 18,800,000

MB_BTN085 RSDL/COMML LOT
L.A. 1,172 sqm.
Villanueva St.,
BRGY. SAN IGNACIO
Min. Bid Price: P 850,000

MB_BTN086 2 STRY. RSDL/COMML BLDG.
L.A. 900 sqm. F.A. 283 sqm.
Lot 372, ST. JOSEPH SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,280,000

MB_BTN087 RSDL LOT
L.A. 791 sqm.
Villa Kananga and Rosal Road
ST. JOSEPH SUBD.,
Brgy. Villa Kananga
Min. Bid Price: P 888,000

*CAGAYAN DE ORO
Text 09217388885

MB_CDO088 COMML LOT
L.A. 2,004 sqm.
ARCH. HAYES ST., 22nd St. (ext.)
Min. Bid Price: P 9,800,000

MB_CDO089 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 730 sqm. F.A. 386 sqm.
CORRALES AVE., Poblacion
Min. Bid Price: P 2,580,000

MB_CDO090 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 390 sqm. F.A. 386 sqm.
VELEZ SUBD., Poblacion
Min. Bid Price: P 1,980,000

MB_CDO090 COMMLLOT
L.A. 369 sqm.
Mabini St., Brgy 14, POBLACION
Min. Bid Price: P 4,500,000

MB_CDO091 COMML BLDG.
L.A. 244 sqm. F.A. 341 sqm.
North Abellanosa St., POBLACION
Min. Bid Price: P 1,880,000

MB_CDO092 RSDL/COMML BLDG.
L.A. 5,777 sqm. F.A. 1,542 sqm.
CORRALES EXT., Brgy. 21, Poblacion
Min. Bid Price: P 28,000,000

MB_CDO093 2 STRY. HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,500 sqm. F.A. 677 sqm.
APOVEL SUBD., Brgy. Bulua
Min. Bid Price: P 4,280,000

MB_CDO094 RSDL LOT
L.A. 483 sqm.
APOVEL SUBD., Bgry. Butua
Min. Bid Price: P 724,500

MB_CDO095 RSDL/INDSL LOT
L.A. 250 sqm.
APOVEL SUBD., Brgy. Bulua
Min. Bid Price: P 375,000

MB_CDO096 RSDL LOT
L.A. 444 sqm.
GOLDEN VILL., Brgy. Carmen
Min. Bid Price: P 750,000

MB_CDO097 VARIOUS RSDL LOT
L.A. 10,021 sqm.
PROMISELAND SUBD., Iponan
Min. Bid Price: P 2,750,000

MB_CDO098 RSDL/OFC BLDG
L.A. 750 sqm. F.A. 314 sqm.
Ramoncilo Chavez St.
APOVEL SUBD., Brgy. Bulua
Min. Bid Price: P 1,680,000

MB_CDO099 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 557 sqm. F.A. 95 sqm.
GALARPE COMPD., Brgy. Kauswagan
Min. Bid Price: P 450,000

MB_CDO100 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,000 sqm. F.A. 215 sqm.
CORONA DRIVE, Tibasak Road
Brgy. Macasandig
Min. Bid Price: P 1,250,000

MB_CDO101 RSDL/COMML BLDG.
L.A. 14,534 sqm. F.A. 4,035 sqm.
NATIONAL HIGHWAY,
Brgy. Kauswagan
SERGIO OSMENA ST., Poblacion
Min. Bid Price: P 75,000,000

MB_CDO102 RSDL LOT
L.A. 947 sqm. F.A. 279 sqm.
Belen Jongko cor. Filipinas Jongko Sts
APOVEL SUBD., Brgy. Bulua
Min. Bid Price: P 1,350,000

MB_CDO103 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 750 sqm. F.A. 336 sqm.
Blas Valez St., APOVEL SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,780,000

MB_CDO104 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 250 sqm. F.A. 389 sqm.
Blas Valez St., APOVEL SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,380,000

MB_CDO105 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,095 sqm. F.A.
Vilarin St., Patag H-way, BRGY. CARMEN
Min. Bid Price: P 1,800,000

MB_CDO106 RSDL LOT
L.A. 238 sqm.
Golden cor. Diamond Aves
BUENAVISTA VILLAGE, Brgy. Patag
Min. Bid Price: P 350,000

MB_CDO107 COMML LOT
L.A. 267.50 sqm.
Corrales Ave. Ext, MACABALAN
Min. Bid Price: P 1,580,000

MB_CDO108 RSDL LOT
L.A. 265 sqm.
BRGY. CONSOLATION
Min. Bid Price: P 180,000

MB_CDO109 RSDL LOT
L.A. 3,537 sqm.
Indahag Rd., Sitio Bolonsori
BRGY. CAMAMAN-AN
Min. Bid Price: P 550,000

MB_CDO110 RSDL LOT
L.A. 500 sqm. F.A. 117.50 sqm.
SUBERE'S COMPD. Carmen
Min. Bid Price: P 200,000

MB_CDO111 RSDL LOT
L.A. 300 sqm.
STA. CECILIA SUBD., Brgy. Cusa
Min. Bid Price: P 600,000

MB-CDO112 RSDL/COMML LOT
L.A. 11,414 sqm.
Lumbia Provl. BRGY. LUMBIA
Min. Bid Price: P 6,888,000

MB_CDO113 RSDL LOT
L.A. 480 sqm.
Ruby St. GOLDEN VILL., Brgy. Carmen
Min. Bid Price: P 960,000

MB_CDO114 RSDL/AGRI LOT
L.A. 14,118 sqm.
Lot 19989, TABLON
Min. Bid Price: P 1,980,000

MB_CDO115 RSDL LOT
L.A. 18,180 sqm.
BRGY. MACASANDIG
Min. Bid Price: P 580,000

MB_CDO116 RSDL LOT
L.A. 2,829 sqm. F.A. 496 sqm.
Lot 5-A and Lot 4, BRGY. CUGMAN
Min. Bid Price: P 3,800,000

**DAVAO DEL NORTE
Text 09219703112

MB_DVN001 RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,752 sqm.
ESTIPONA HOMES. Sto. Tomas
Min. Bid Price: P 288,000

MB_DVN003 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 400 sqm. F.A. 160 sqm.
Brgy. Anislagan, MACO
Min. Bid Price: P 680,000

**DAVAO CITY
Text 09219703112

MB_DVS005 RSDL LOT
L.A. 175 sqm. (2 lots avail)
CULUSA SUBD., Brgy. Lizada, Toril
Min. Bid Price: P 60,000

MB_DVS006 RSDL LOT
L.A. 175 sqm.
CULUSA SUBD., Brgy. Lizada, Toril
Min. Bid Price: P 98,000

MB_DVS007 RSDL LOT
L.A. 500 sqm.
Brgy. Bago OSHIRO
Min. Bid Price: P 40,000

MB_DVS008 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,423 sqm. F.A. 168 sqm.
Carpio Subd. Road
CARPIO SUBD., Brgy. Buhangin
Min. Bid Price: P 2,200,000

MB_DVS009 RSDL LOT
L.A. 36,765 sqm.
Brgy. Tacunan, MINTAL
Min. Bid Price: P 2,800,000

MB_DVS010 RSDL LOT
L.A. 2,103 sqm.
Quirino St., Poblacion, DIGOS
Min. Bid Price: P 300,000

MB_DVS011 RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,184 sqm.
Brgy. San Jose, DIGOS
Min. Bid Price: P 250,000

MB_DVS012 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 272 sqm. F.A. 71 sqm.
Discuatan Rd. cor. Alley
ILOCANO VILL., Toril
Min. Bid Price: P 300,000

MB_DVS013 RSDL/INDSL LOT
L.A. 10,000 sqm.
Brgy. Sinawilan, DIGOS
Min. Bid Price: P 980,000

MB_DVS014 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 2,434 sqm. F.A. 285 sqm.
ST. JUDE VILLAGE
Brgy. Daliao, TORIL
Min. Bid Price: P 2,300,000

MB_DVS015 COMML LOT
L.A. 721 sqm.
F. Iñigo St., POBLACION
Min. Bid Price: P 9,800,000

MB_DVS016 2-STRY. COMML BLDG.
L.A. 8,582 sqm. F.A. 2,829 sqm.
BRC VILL., Brgy. Catalunan Pequeño
Min. Bid Price: P 8,880,000

**GEN. SANTOS CITY
Text 09267666746

MB_GSC021 RSDL LOT
L.A. 619 sqm.
P. ACHARON BLVD., Dadiangas Heights
Min. Bid Price: P 2,380,000

MB_GSC022 RSDL LOT
L.A. 487 sqm.
Sergio Osmeña Street
BRGY. DADIANGAS East
Min. Bid Price: P 980,000

MB_GSC023 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 457 sqm. F.A.
Kadulasan St., POBLACION
Min. Bid Price: P 1,280,000

MB-GSC024 RSDL LOT
L.A. 324 sqm.
ABC COMPD Brgy. Apopong
Min. Bid Price: P 50,000

MB_GSC025 RSDL LOT
L.A. 562 sqm.
SALANGSANG SUBD., Brgy. San Isidro
Min. Bid Price: P 200,000

MB_GSC026 RSDL LOT
L.A. 307 sqm. (2 lots available)
CITY HEIGHTS
Min. Bid Price: P 650,000

MB_GSC027 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 247 sqm. F.A.
LANSANG SUBD. Brgy. Apupong
Min. Bid Price: P 888,000

MB-GSC028 RSDL LOT
Brgy. TAMBLER

LOT AREA	Minimum Bid Price
269 sqm.	P 50,000
1,052 sqm.	263,000
1,685 sqm.	420,000
2,400 sqm.	600,000

MB-GSC029 2 STRY. HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 495 sqm. F.A.
Sampaguita cor. Gumamela St.
Purok Bagong Silang, BRGY. LABANGAL
Min. Bid Price: P 1,000,000

MB_GSC030 RSDL LOT
L.A. 5,902 sqm.
CELCARY SUBD., Brgy. Bula
Min. Bid Price: P 4,426,500

MB_GSC031 RSDL LOT W/ IMPVT
L.A. 1,000 sqm.
BRGY. TAMBLER
Min. Bid Price: P 250,000

MB_GSC032 RSDL/COMML LOT
L.A. 350 sqm.
Napolan Rd., BALANGASAN DISTRICT
Min. Bid Price: P 150,000

MB_GSC033 RSDL LOT
L.A. 940 sqm.
San Miguel St., LLIDO COMPD.
Brgy. Lagao
Min. Bid Price: P 2,880,000

MB_GSC034 RSDL LOT
L.A. 497 sqm.
Nuñez St.,VILLEGAS SUBD.
Purok Malakas
Min. Bid Price: P 180,000

MB_GSC035 RSDL LOT
L.A. 5,081 sqm.
Purok Malakas & MANANSALA SUBD.
Min. Bid Price: P 1,500,000

MB_GSC036 RSDL LOT
L.A. 11,247 sqm.
Nuñez cor. Perez Sts. BRGY. SAN ISIDRO
Min. Bid Price: P 5,000,000

MB_GSC037 RSDL LOT
L.A. 180 sqm. (8 lots avail)
TOLEDO SUBD., Brgy. Lagao
Min. Bid Price: P 144,000

MB_GSC129 RSDL LOT
L.A. 500 sqm.
PARADISE SUBD., Brgy. City Heights
Min. Bid Price: P 600,000

MB_GSC039 RSDL LOT
L.A. 498 sqm.
PARADISE SUBD., Brgy. City Heights
Min. Bid Price: P 597,600

MB_GSC040 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 593 sqm. F.A. 248 sqm.
J.P. Laurel St., Poblacion, SARALLAH
Min. Bid Price: P 1,580,000

*ILIGAN CITY
Text 09194032583

MB_ILC117 RSDL LOT
L.A. 10,992 sqm.
BRGY. TIPANOY
Min. Bid Price: P 1,880,000

MB_ILC118 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 922 sqm. F.A.
ISABEL VILL., Brgy. Pala-o
Min. Bid Price: P 1,750,000

MB_ILC119 2-STRY HSE & LOT
L.A. 230 sqm. F.A. 128 sqm.
BRGY. TIPANOY
Min.. Bid Price: P 250,000

MB_ILC120 HOUSE & LOT w/ ATTIC
L.A. 405 sqm. F.A. 288 sqm.
P. N. ROA SUBD., Brgy. Canitoan
Min. Bid Price: P 1,450,000

MB_ILC121 RSDL/COMML BLDG.
L.A. 3,710 sqm. F.A. 2,166 sqm.
Nat'l H-way. BRGY. CUGMAN
Min. Bid Price: P 15,800,000

MB_ILC122 4 STRY. COMML BLDG.
L.A. 500 sqm. F.A. 1,666 sqm.
Laya St., BRGY. PALA-O
Min. Bid Price: P 7,800,000

*MISAMIS ORIENTAL

MB_MSO123 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 300 sqm. F.A. 169 sqm.
SAN AGUSTIN VILL.
Brgy. Casinglot, Tagoloan
Min. Bid Price: P 600,000

MB_MSO124 2 STRY. HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 1,600 sqm. F.A.
SABIO COMPD., Tagoloan
Min. Bid Price: P 460,000

MB_MSO125 RSDL/AGRI LOT
L.A. 11,459 sqm.
Brgy. Taboc, OPOL
Min. Bid Price: P 5,800,000

**NORTH COTABATO
Text 09157470332

MB_COT017 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 515 sqm. F.A. 133 sqm.
National Hway, Brgy. Sadaan, MIDSAYAP
Min. Bid Price: P 380,000

MB_COT018 RSDL LOT
L.A. 548 sqm.
Poblacion, MIDSAYAP
Min. Bid Price: P 1,600,000

MB_COT019 COMML LOT
L.A. 1,565 sqm.
Singayo St., Poblacion, LIBUNGAN
Min. Bid Price: P 650,000

MB_COT020 COMML LOT
L.A. 274.50 sqm.
Poblacion, MIDSAYAP
Min. Bid Price: P 800,000

**OZAMIS CITY

MB_OZS127 HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 100 sqm. F.A. 48 sqm.
STO. NIÑO VILL., Brgy.Aguada
Min. Bid Price: P 200,000

**SULTAN KUDARAT
Text 09157470332

MB_SK041 RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,785 sqm.
Poblacion, TACURONG CITY
Min. Bid Price: P 9,800,000

MB-SK042 RSDL LOT
L.A. 450 sqm.
VALDEZ SUBD., Tacurong City
Min. Bid Price: P 450,000

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Tax collection up in six cities

Increase attributed to cut in business registration time

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SIX CITIES ARE REAPING THE benefits of a US-funded transparency and anti-graft program with tax collections increasing due to simplified business registration processes.

According to The Asia Foundation, reforms in the business permits and licensing system (BPLS) in the cities of Oroquieta, Malaybalay, Koronadal, Ozamiz, Tacurong and Zamboanga indicated overall success.

In Malaybalay City, tax collection from business permits went up 119 percent to P7.17 million in the January 2-20 period.

At the same time, the number of permits issued went up 85 percent to 1,905.

The increases were attributed mainly to the cut in the processing time to an hour and six minutes from two hours and 10 minutes.

In Ozamiz City, collection went up 15 percent to P22 million and processing time was shortened to a day from three days.

In Zamboanga City, collection went up 195 percent to P29.5 million while the number of times a business owner needed to visit City Hall for assessment and payment was reduced to one from six.

In Tacurong City, collection increased 64 percent to P5.5 million; processing time was shortened to two hours from two and a half days; the number of forms was reduced to just one and the needed signatures cut down to four from 11.

In Koronadal City, taxes from permits increased 44 percent to P7.6 million; the number of permits issued increased 58 percent to 1,505; the number of forms halved to just two; and processing time shortened to a day from seven working days.

In Oroquieta City, tax collection went up 2 percent to P2.5 million and processing time decreased to just about two hours from a day and a half.

Steven Rood, The Asia Foundation country representative, explained that the BPLS was part of the agency's Transparent Accountable Governance Program.

Rood said BPLS was aimed primarily at shortening the processing time for permits and licenses, simplifying forms, reducing the number of forms and increasing tax collection.

"We are cooperating with the local governments and the business community which has direct material interest on better governance," he said.

The six cities make up the second batch of BPLS reform efforts under the TAG project.

The first batch that started in 2002 covered the cities of Cotabato, Marawi, Iligan, Samal Island, General Santos, Surigao and Dapitan.

Last Friday, The Asia Foundation launched a video titled "Reinventing Business Permitting Means Better Business Climate," which featured the achievements of the second batch.

Rood said the TAG project also involved municipalities in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, where local officials were encouraged to allocated their town's budget in projects that they chose.

TAX/B10

Talking to Harry

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

HARRY TAMBUATCO HOSTS A TV talk show "Talk to Harry." I was his guest recently. We had met at the RJTV Bar during the Hapi Our show that Harry also hosts. Over a couple of rounds of beer, he decided he wanted to talk to me.

Harry and I talked about many things during his show, but let me only expand our chat on the shift to a unicameral parliamentary system as proposed by many.

I made it clear to Harry that I was intensely against the shift to a parliamentary system, and even more so, if it will be unicameral.

Those in favor of the shift say that a parliamentary system will automatically lead to strong political parties, while our present presidential system has only resulted in developing weak parties.

Strong political parties do not automatically blossom in a parliamentary system. Political parties in Thailand were so weak that turncoatism was rampant.

A law had to be passed that if a member of parliament voted against his party on an important issue, he was not only out of the party but out of the parliament completely. This experience is repeated in India.

In Malaysia, the opposition is so weak that the fighting is within the majority. We then saw the ridiculous situation where the Prime Minister sent his deputy to jail. In Singapore, the majority party constantly harasses the opposition, which is clinging to two lonely seats out of eighty-four.

A democracy takes years and years to build strong parties to make a parliament work just as they are needed to make a presidential system work. That is what democracy is all about.

What makes a political party strong? Not the form of government. But the party's internal mechanism of rewards and penalties.

For example, in the United Kingdom, you do not have to be a resident of the district where you will run. There are districts that have voted for Labor for a hundred years.

Tony Blair assigns the most loyal party members to run in those districts. When they win, they are beholden to Blair and the New Labor Party. The less loyal members are assigned to districts dominated by the Conservatives. This is the way the party members are kept in line.

Here, the pork barrel funds are used to discipline party members. This is called the power of the purse. He who rules the gold, rules the world. Notice how much fewer were the votes for impeachment this year than last year. Notice how those who voted for impeachment this year have to beg for funds for typhoon relief for their districts.

Another reason being foisted on us by the parliamentarians is that, in a parliament, the political parties exist because of their underlying ideologies, while under our presidential system, the parties do not have any ideologies at all.

This may be true at the start of a parliamentary system. But as the years go by, ideology gives way to tradition. Families are liberals because their fathers and grandfathers were liberals.

Sometime last year, I attended a seminar on the Canadian parliamentary/federal system. One of the main speakers explained two points that have stuck in my mind.

First, the Canadian political parties now exist because of tradition, no longer by their original ideologies. In the United States, the two major parties have lost their ideologies.

The Republican Party is the party of Big Business. The Democratic Party is the party of the small man; this is why every Filipino I have met in the United States is a Democrat.

The other point that the lecturer explained was that, after 130 years, the Canadian system is still a work in progress. It is still evolving. Here, we want to discard a presidential system that is barely 60 years old because it is not supposedly working.

Why don't we just patch up our system? Strengthen its weaknesses. Prop up its strengths.

Finally, Harry asked, "Why are you really, really against the parliamentary system?" Because, I said, I have 17 grandchildren and three great grandchildren, and I am their best friend.

I don't want them to grow up under a parliamentary system. But, God forbid, if they ever do, they won't spit on my grave because I did not do what I should have done to try and stop this foolish shift to the unicameral parliamentary system.

Gov't urges small insurance firms to merge

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT WANTS SMALL INSURance companies to begin scouting for partners for possible mergers or consolidation, saying this was a way to make the local industry compete head on with its foreign counterparts.

Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo said that instead of complaining about the recent directive for insurance firms to increase their capitalization, small industry players should start working on becoming big.

"If resources are little, it will be strategic to pull funds to fight with the giants rather than keep on being small players," Escobillo said in an interview.

The commissioner said requiring insurance firms to beef up their capital was a way to better protect insurance policy holders and boost confidence in the industry.

While saying their products were different from pre-need, insurance firms admitted that liquidity problems experienced by some pre-need companies had some spillover effects on the confidence in insurance products.

The Insurance Commission recently issued a directive requiring insurance firms to increase their capitalization every year, starting this December, over the medium term. The amount of annual increase depends on the amount of foreign equity in an insurance company, with the fully locally owned firms required the minimum P25 million.

Some members of the Philippine Life Insurance Association (Plia) are opposed to the directive, saying the amount of annual increase required was too high for small players to comply with. The group warned that the directive would force some to close down, to the disadvantage of policy holders.

Plia said it was amenable to increasing capital, but that the required increase should only be one time, from the current P50 million to P100 million. The group also said it was in support of the risk-based capital approach, wherein the amount of additional increase to be required should not be uniform, but should be based on the amount of risks that an insurance firm covers.

Escobillo said, however, that the fact that the increase would be done gradually was intended to give small players time to merge or consolidate. A one-time increase would not reflect willingness for the insurance industry to become competitive, she added.

But Escobillo likewise said that the risk-based approach would also be implemented, although in tandem with the annual increase in required capitalization.

The Insurance Commission was preparing for the issuance of a regulation, and its implementing guidelines, requiring insurance firms to adopt the risk-based approach, she said.

After the regulation is issued, the Insurance Commission will classify insurance firms based on their capitalization and their respective risk-to-capitalization ratio.

Each classification will state the limits on the product lines that an insurance firm can offer, the amount of insurance it provides its clients, and the geographic areas where it can operate.

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Senate to pursue curb on tax perks

THE SENATE WAYS AND MEANS committee has vowed to push a bill rationalizing the granting of fiscal incentives to businesses despite what appears to be President Macapagal-Arroyo's withdrawal of support to the unpopular revenue-enhancement measure.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the ways and means committee, said politics should not go in the way of how economic-related bills should progress. The legislator said he hoped the bill could be enacted into law prior to next year's elections.

Recto stressed that the fiscal incentives rationalization bill, or Senate Bill No. 2411, was a necessary measure to plug huge revenue leakages and provide more flexibility in the government's restricted budget.

"Any impediment to its implementation will be a drag on the government's ability to spend for capital outlay, which will provide medium- to long-term benefits," Recto told reporters.

The fiscal incentives rationalization bill intends to limit the granting of tax- and duty-free privileges only to exporters and to businesses that will locate in the country's 30 poorest provinces.

The intention of the bill is to do away with incentives that are considered "redundant," or if the recipient businesses would have invested in the country anyway even without the tax- or duty-free perk.

A study commissioned by the Department of Finance said that 83 percent of the incentives granted by the Board of Investments were redundant. The DOF estimated that the government loses about P300 billion in potential revenues a year due to the granting of fiscal incentives.

While reluctant to believe that the President might have already reversed her stand on the issue of rationalizing fiscal incentives, Recto said that not pushing through with the bill would be a waste of efforts to help put the country's fiscal house in order.

"I don't think she (the President) categorically said she will not support the rationalization bill. (Perhaps what she said was) she will not support anything that will decrease competitiveness of the Philippines," Recto said.

Speaking before members of the business community in a forum on foreign direct investments last week, the President said the Philippines would not become less competitive in terms of granting fiscal incentives.

"I want to assure you that our policy is to keep and to improve the incentives the Philippines offers strategic foreign and domestic investors," the President was quoted as saying.

Aside from limiting the granting of incentives, the bill, which was earlier cited by Malacañang as urgent, also intends to do away with the automatic granting of zero value-added tax privilege to exporters.

Exporters are automatically granted the zero VAT privilege every time they import goods, particularly inputs to production.

Should the bill be passed, however, exporters will be required to first pay the VAT on imports and then ask for refunds after providing documents proving that the imports were used as inputs for their exported goods. *Michelle V. Remo*

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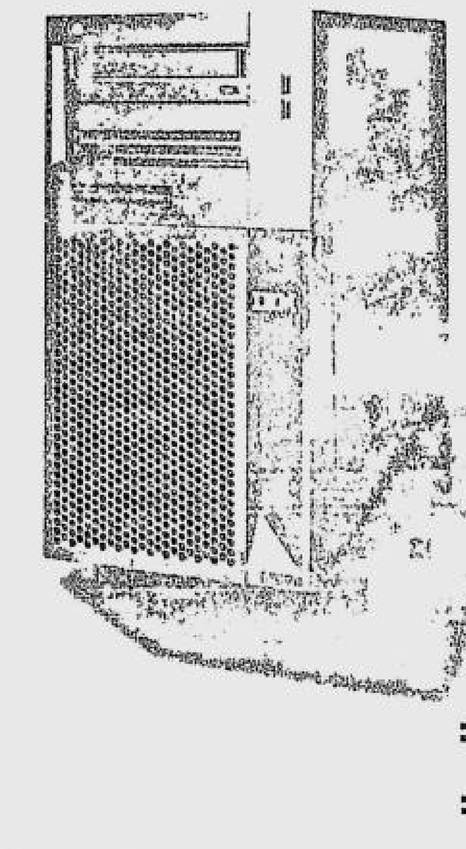

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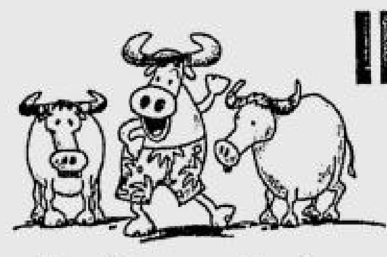

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JOB Market

Property firm earmarks ₱1B for Cebu projects

Filinvest Land focusing more on building BPO facilities

By Abigail L. Ho

FILINVEST LAND INC. IS SINKING P1 billion into a new development in Cebu—a combination of business process outsourcing (BPO) facilities and residential buildings.

Josephine Gotianun-Yap, president of FLI parent Filinvest Development Corp. (FDC), said the project was now on the "conceptual stage" and that a soft launch should be conducted within the fourth quarter.

The entire development covered 4,000 lots and was right across the Ayala properties in Cebu, she said.

The Cebu project, she said, was part of the real estate developer's bid to strengthen its presence in areas outside Metro Manila.

"But we maintain our position and continue to expand in the (National Capital Region)," she said.

For next year, she said FDC, which included Filinvest Land and Filinvest Corporate City developer Filinvest Alabang Inc., would be prioritizing the establishment of more BPO buildings while expanding its core business—residential subdivisions development.

She said demand for quality office space continued to surge, due to the contact center and BPO boom that the country is currently experiencing. FDC would be concentrating on putting up more IT buildings, in line with the demand for such facilities.

"We don't see demand slowing down as of now. So far, it's been very strong. As long as there's a cost differential and government continues to respond to the need for good personnel by improving education, the trend will continue to be upward," she said.

She added that locators at the Northgate Cyberzone information technology park within the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang were very pleased with the quality of Filipino workers, indicating possible local expansions in the future.

Locators include HSBC, Convergys and latest additions e-Telecare Global Solutions and GE subsidiary GenPact.

e-Telecare, for example, had just moved into the newly inaugurated Plaza A building at the Northgate Cyberzone, and yet it already wanted to expand its operations in the area, she said.

She added that Filinvest Alabang was also undertaking "complementary developments" within the Filinvest Corporate City to cater to the needs of the BPO workers there.

These include the Studio One residential condominium and the Fast Bytes 24-hour dining and retail hub.

On the residential subdivisions side, she said new developments would focus on those that would cater to the middle-income market and the overseas Filipino workers.

She said FDC had allotted about P1 billion for this year to further develop Northgate Cyberzone.

DOE backs tighter rules on exploration deals

THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAS expressed support for Philippine National Oil Co.'s move to adopt stricter rules in the qualification and selection of prospective joint venture partners in the country's upstream petroleum industry.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the stricter rules "will ensure the protection of these valuable resources even as we accelerate their development and utilization for the benefit of the country."

"The DoE lauds the aggressive move by PNOC president (Eduardo) Mañalac to further refine the policies and procedures in the selection of the government's joint venture partners in this important endeavor," Lotilla said.

Mañalac earlier announced that the PNOC would impose the stricter rules in a bid to rid the sector of "fly-by-night and bogus exploration companies" and to ensure that only legitimate entities were allowed to take part in the government's energy development activities.

He said PNOC would publish the new guidelines within the month and present them to prospective local and international investors soon.

According to Lotilla, the energy sector was expected to "close ranks behind the PNOC bid to modernize the petroleum exploration sector and hasten the entry of technologically and financially capable investors."

UCPB opens loan facility for SMEs

UNITED COONUT PLANTERS BANK HAS launched a new mortgage-based loan facility that would allow SMEs to leverage their real estate holdings to grow their businesses.

UCPB first vice president for consumer banking David C. Mercado said that with the bank's new small business loan, SMEs could use their real estate assets as security to raise up to P5 million in fresh funds to beef up heir working capital and acquire new fixed assets.

UCPB is allocating P800 million this year for lending through this facility, Mercado said.

Peso appreciation seen to hurt Cebu economy

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE APPRECIAtion of the peso would have adverse impact on the Cebu economy since exports account for the bulk of its earnings.

Cebu contributes about 10 percent of the country's exports earnings. For the first six months of the year, Cebu exports reached $2.36 billion. The province accounts for more than 90 percent of Central Visayas' total exports.

Cebu exporters are alarmed over the continued strengthening of the peso against the dollar.

"Unpredictability is something the exporters is worrying about now, because we do not know how strong can the peso go," Mandaue Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Eric Ng Mendoza said.

Mendoza, who owns a furniture company and is an officer of the Cebu Furniture Industry Foundation Inc. (CFIF), said exporters usually negotiate orders six months to one year in advance and fix the price based on current peso-dollar exchange rate.

He said they could no longer change the quoted prices later even if there were changes in the exchange rate.

He said buyers rarely allowed price adjustments because they could always get cheaper furniture in other Asian countries, especially Vietnam and China.

"That is why, it (strong peso) is very detrimental to exporters. We are losing our competitiveness in our region, " he said.

Furniture exporters, he said, were already experiencing the adverse effects of the strong peso.

The CFIF members reported that their production had dropped by 20 percent in the third quarter from their first and second quarter levels.

Mendoza urged the government to help the export sector cope with the peso strengthening.

Asked what kind of assistance, He said help could come in the form of incentives.

Philexport president Apolinar Suarez said the association had furnished President Macapagal-Arroyo a position paper asking her to find ways to help the exporters.

"We, the exporters are seemingly becoming victims, instead of heroes of our looming economic success. We need the help of the government and to take issue on our plight to enable us to continue making our contribution to a sustained economic recovery that has so far been elusive in the past," Suarez said in Philexport four-page letter.

A Family Oasis with 65% Open Area..

Developed by Robinsons Land Corporation (RLC), the country's Property Developer of Choice, Woodsville Viverde Mansions is the newest nature and family inspired residential community to rise in the suburbs of Makati.

A gated-community beside Merville and situated between Bicutan and Nichols Interchange, this modern 9-12 storey condo development is only 10 minutes drive from the bustling Ayala Avenue - readily accessible by both private and public transportation.

Master-planned for 14 buildings, this engaging 3-hectare residential community is safe, tranquil and generous in open areas and amenities. With a staggering 65% open area - this unique concept allows the whole Woodsville Viverde Mansions community to enjoy, breathe and relax in the environment of verdant greeneries and lots of trees.

RLC High-Rise Buildings General Manager, Mr. Danilo E. Ignacio said, "We are proud that we have developed a prime property that is truly within reach, so close to Makati but not with the stiff price tag of Makati properties. A community inspired by nature that allots wide open spaces, lots of greeneries and trees for families to enjoy. This project is designed for start-up families to own their first condo."

RLC said the 1st condo building will be ready for turnover by December 2007. This fast construction development is ideal for start-up families who prefers to move in immediately - with this, families need not wait with the usual industry practice of 4-5 years construction period. Each floor will have 8-12 units, giving it a low residential density ratio.

An inviting place with great amenities designed with children in mind. Families here can enjoy an array of big pluses: big swimming pool for kids to frolic and swim, indoor and outdoor playgrounds where kids could play tag, run and fly the freesbie, or have a simple picnic that allows bonding with the family.

Woodsville Viverde Mansions will have its own village mall that offers valued residents the unique convenience of living beside a mall. Nearby are several malls that allow families to enjoy more shopping, malling, watch great movies, dining and more. Close in proximity are prominent schools like Woodrose, San Beda Alabang, Don Bosco Makati, Colegio de San Agustin and more.

Mr. Ignacio added, "An unbeatable deal. Our affordable models coupled with RLC's track record and nature inspired community development will definitely entice working professionals and executives to own their first family condo." Condominium units are affordably available with Studio at P1M, 2-BR at 2M and 3-BR at P2.5M - all offering attractive payment schemes that allow easy monthly payments.

Residents can experience convenient living right at the comforts of their condo. A continuing value innovation, RLC made sure that all 2-BR and 3-BR units have a maid's room to facilitate ease of living. The condo also has a spacious roof deck for laundry drying - plus conveniences that are available at Woodsville Viverde Mansions.

Enjoy a family oasis where living with nature brings fulfillment to one's family's safety, health and well-being. For inquiries, please call Robinsons Land Corporation High-Rise Buildings Division at 636-0888 or 0922-8380888.

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Paradigm shift in the agriculture struggle

By Ernesto Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

IN HIS BOOK, "ALL I REALLY NEED TO Know I Learned in Kindergarten," Robert Fulghum wrote: "And it is still true—no matter how old you are, when you go out into the world, it is best to hold hands and stick together." But with whom do we hold hands and stick together?

Small farmers and fisherfolk have long been neglected. Here are some indicators culled from a presentation by director Novel Bangsal of the congressional planning and budget department.

- Labor productivity in Philippine agriculture has been one of the lowest in Asia, next only to Indonesia. Between 2000 and 2002, the average labor productivity here was $700, while Thailand and Malaysia were at $2,168.00 and US$5,560.00, respectively. The gap is even wider today.
- Post harvest losses in rice production here reach 34 percent, while Thailand's is only 15 percent.
- Prices paid for fertilizers by Filipinos are much higher than the world price.
- Compared to the WTO benchmark of providing domestic support at 10 percent of total agricultural output, the average allocation for our agriculture is only 6 percent.

When I left the Department of Agriculture in 2002, its budget was P20 billion. This was P13 billion less than the P33 billion mandated by the Agricultural and Fisheries Modernization Act. Instead of increasing it to meet the required level, the DA budget was further decreased to P16.8 billion in 2003; P13.6 billion in 2004, and P13.5 billion in P2005. In 2006, it is P15.8 billion.

Beginnings of unity

In January 2003, the small farmers and fisherfolk decided to bond together. The first step was to unite each sector. The rice farmers in Luzon did not talk to the rice farmers in the Visayas and Mindanao. This changed, and thus was born the Rice Farmers' Council in the Philippines. The same pattern developed in other areas, such as corn where we now have the Phil Maize, hogs where we have the National Federation of Hog Raisers in the Philippines, and fisheries, where we have the Kilusang Mangingisda. Having united in each sector, all agricultural and fisheries sectors across the country then united to form the Alyansa Agrikultura on Jan. 21, 2003.

However, working together on an issue to issue basis lack the systemic comprehensive approach needed for true development. A year later, on Jan. 21, 2004, Alyansa leaders agreed on a common agri-fisheries agenda, which was presented to all the presidential candidates during the May 2004 election. Each candidate agreed on most of these agenda items: Some have been implemented, but much more has to be done.

Realizing that we live in a global liberalized trade environment, the Alyansa entered the international scene to unite with other developing countries. On Nov. 24, 2004, the Alyansa led the formulation of four WTO positions agreed upon by private sector representatives from 10 developing countries in an international trade conference held in Penang, Malaysia.

The paradigm then was to unite the farmers and fisherfolk on one side to deal with the government on the other side. While this farmer-fisherfolk unity had good results, the pace of success was perceived to be too slow. At that point, the Alyansa took a paradigm shift.

Just as there are good and bad forces in the government, so is it in the private sector. The decision taken was to shift from the private sector versus government paradigm to the good forces versus the bad forces paradigm. In other words, we had to identify and unite with the good forces in the DA, then engage in a battle the bad forces in the government.

Initial results

The results of this new paradigm have been very encouraging. The Alyansa leaders are now in every DA sub-sector grouping. Thus, instead of engaging primarily through position papers, sporadic dialogues, and even street demonstrations (and when appropriate, these still continue), the farmer and the fisherfolk are now involved in institutionalized continuous and constructive dialogue. Even on the world stage, in a pioneering unprecedented move the DA included Alyansa farmer and fisher leaders as part of the Philippine official delegation to the WTO ministerial meeting on Dec. 13 to 18, 2005 in Hong Kong. The result of this was the WTO adoption of creative mechanisms that support our agricultural sector, such as "sensitive products," and "special safeguards."

In the area of smuggling, the good forces in the private sector (honest farmers and fisherfolk) and government (conscientious government regulators) are increasing their unity against the bad forces (smugglers in the private sector and corrupt officials in the government).

A 30-day challenge

Today, we are the only country in the world where the Bureau of Customs evaluates imported goods before the DA quarantine division inspects them. This has resulted in unsafe goods being smuggled in with BOC approval but without any quarantine inspection.

Last Sept. 27, in a meeting with DA senior officials, farmer-fisherfolk leaders asked why

PARADIGM / B9

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High metal prices jacking up cost

By Doris C. Dumlao

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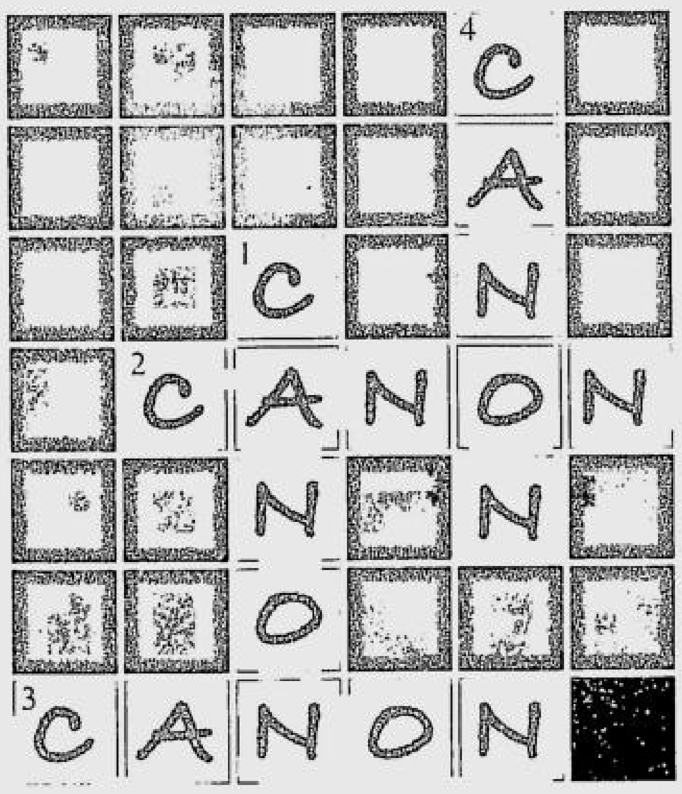

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Business Can be simple

ALFM Family of Funds: Investing in solid performance

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In the local mutual fund industry, one family of funds stands out in meeting the above mentioned criteria and has grown to become the Investors' No. 1 Choice. The ALFM Family of Funds - consisting of the ALFM Peso Bond Fund, the ALFM Dollar Bond Fund, and the ALFM Euro Bond Fund - currently holds P29 billion of the entire industry's P60 billion.

Professional Fund Management

The track record of the fund manager is one of the most important aspects that an investor should consider before investing in any mutual fund. Truly, an investor should properly know the institution which would be managing his/her money. The ALFM Funds are carefully managed by their respective fund managers; namely: BPI Asset Management for the ALFM Peso, BPI Investment Management, Inc. for the ALFM Dollar and BPI Asset Management, Inc. for the ALFM Euro. Each is composed of an experienced team of professional fund managers who are abreast with market developments and who are quick to identify opportunities for the respective funds' growth.

Furthermore, these fund managers send out monthly reports to investors to update them on the funds' returns, portfolio composition as well as the market review and the fund managers' outlook.

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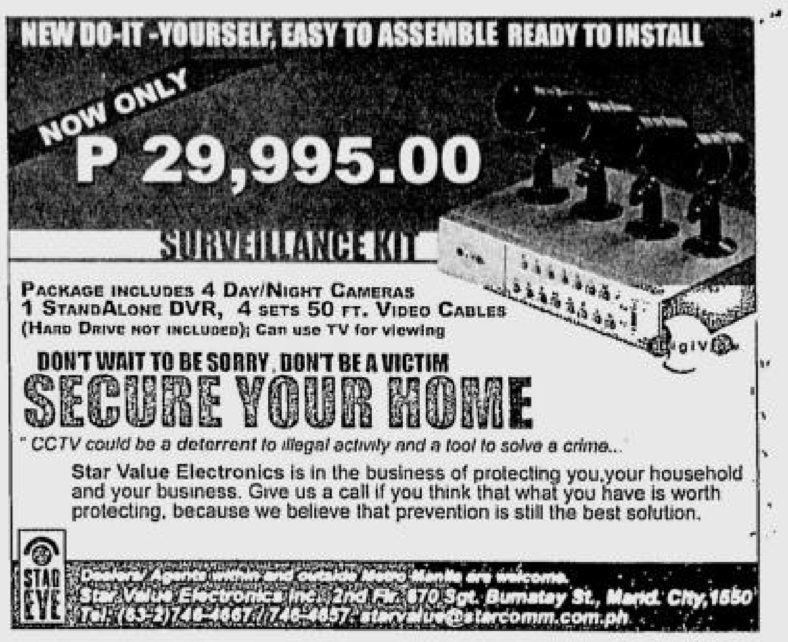
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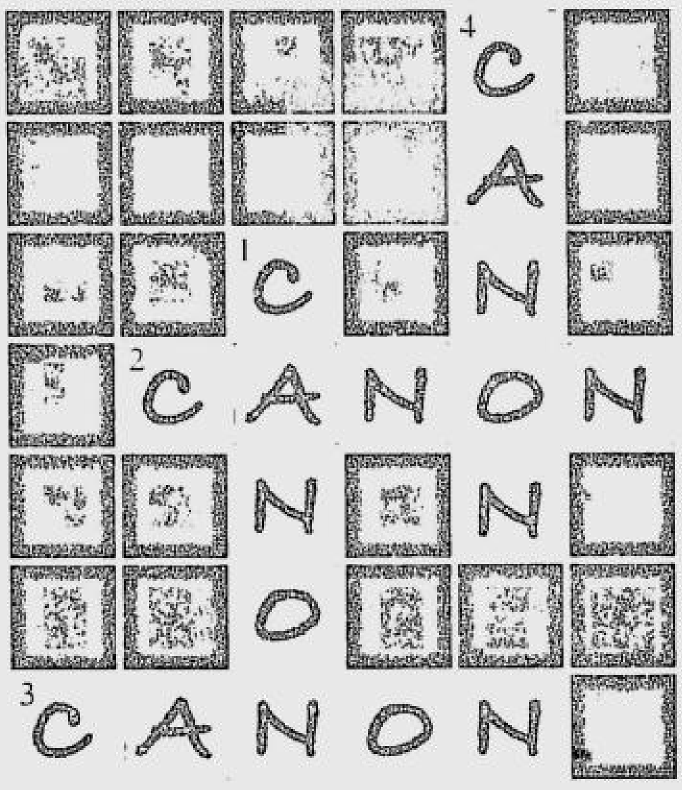

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SM hikes budget, eyes acquisitions

Analysts remain upbeat, see good market earnings

ANALYSTS REMAIN OPTIMISTIC ON Investor appetite for stocks this week boosted by bets of lower interest rates which usually spell good earnings for companies.

However, some analysts are also saying that the market is in for a temporary breather before resuming its bull run.

"Prospects of an interest rate cut locally has revived share prices and injected some life among the bulls of the Philippine equities market," according to AB Capital Securities' technical analysis. "However, the chart pattern of the PSEi (Philippine Stock Exchange index) is still the type that may result in some consolidation before the index runs up."

AB Capital added that there may be some weakness if the index does not break a 2,600 psychological resistance level.

"If the resistance level of 2,600 can be breached, it would indicate that the market is confident enough to accept higher valuations and price multiples," AB Capital Securities said. "This could be justified if interest rates are indeed reduced. We are betting that the market may consolidate for now, but it will eventually break out of the 2,600 level and end the year at its highest level for 2006."

The Bangko Sentral predicted inflation may average 6.6 percent this year despite pressure caused by Typhoon "Milenyo," which fueled market opinion that the BSP may be poised to cut key rates.

What fueled this expectation was news of tame inflation at 5.7 percent in September, the lowest since June 2004, when it hit 5.4 percent.

Benign inflation was supported by a stronger peso and lower oil prices, the National Statistics Office said on Thursday. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Sy family wants to build a mall in China each year; a third is set to open in 2007

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE GROUP OF MALL CZAR HENRY SY HAS decided to do something about their upbeat outlook on the property market and hiked its budget next year to between P6 and P7 billion for land acquisitions and the construction of new malls.

In the past years prior to its launch of Mall of Asia, the country's largest mall, publicly listed SM Prime spends an average of P5 billion for new malls every year, SM Prime Holdings Inc. executive vice president Jeffrey Lim said after the Philippine Real Estate Investment Trust Forum at the Makati Shangri-La late Friday.

This year, the company will spend some P1 to P1.5 billion for land acquisitions while the rest of the budget will go to the development of new malls, said Jose Sio, SM Prime chief finance officer.

Malls that are scheduled to open next year are now being constructed in Taytay, Rizal, Muntinlupa City, and Bacolod City. SM Bacolod is expected to open in the first quarter of 2007.

The projects are being financed with a combination of borrowings and internally generated cash.

On October 20, the Sy family expects to open a third mall in China. The 170,000-square-meter establishment in Chengdu province will have tenants such retail giant Wal-Mart and Taiwan-based department store Laiya.

The Sy family's investments in China are personal ventures and are not under the publicly held firm SM Prime.

The family hopes to build one mall a year in China. Currently, it is looking for a location for a fourth mall outside of major cities.

HENRY SY

Sy's family has expanded quietly in China, opening its second mall late last year on the southeast coast of one of the world's largest economies.

The second mall also occupies an area of 170,000 square meters and is located in Jin Jiang City in Fujian province.

The Sy family opened its first 120,000 sqm shopping mall on Crossroad West in Xiamen in 2003.

SM Prime on the other hand has opened five malls in Luzon this year: SM Lipa in Batangas, SM City Sta. Rosa, SM City Clark, SM Mall of Asia and SM Supercenter Pasig.

Counting the new establishments, SM Prime's total malls now number 27.

The newly opened malls also expanded the company's gross floor area to 3.6 million sqm.

DOF submits recommendations seen to fine-tune Palace order

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE HAS SUBMITTED to Malacañang its own recommendations that is expected to fine-tune Executive Order No. 558, which allows government institutions to conduct direct microfinance lending.

According to Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, the agency has proposed to President Macapagal-Arroyo that the conduct of microfinance lending should be limited to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), barring all other line agencies.

Teves said that the DSWD is the only agency that has the capability to reach out to the unserved clients of government financial institutions—mainly, those from the poorest communities and municipalities.

In an interview at the sidelines of the National Summit of Cooperatives held last week, Teves added that another key recommendation of the DOF is for the DSWD to lead the selection of 47 municipalities nationwide, where residents have limited or no access to microfinance lending.

By identifying the marginal municipalities in urgent need of good financing terms, Teves expects to ease the concern of rural banks and private microfinance lenders that they stand to lose business once EO No. 558 goes into full swing.

The DOF also proposed that an initial P100-million fund be raised to jumpstart the program.

He also cited the ne ed for the LandBank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines to be involved in the government's microfinance lending program. Teves said that the institutions would prove invaluable in monitoring the conduct of the program, particularly the collection system to be put in place.

He said the recommendations had been submitted to Ms Arroyo for her consideration before the guidelines of EO 558 are implemented.

EO 558 cancels out a previous order, EO 138, issued by former President Joseph Estrada. EO 138 was seen to have strengthened the rural banking sector, allowing it to undertake extensive microfinance lending to individual borrowers, most of whom are engaged in farming, fishing and other livelihood activities.

Property trust investments bill pushed

A SENATOR WANTS THE PRIVATE SECTOR and its regulators to fast-track proposals that would help put in place a law allowing property trust investments in the country.

But Sen. Edgardo Angara, chair of the Senate committee on banks, admitted that it may be too late for the Senate to deliberate on possible legislation for Real Estate Investment Trusts (Reit) this year given the backlog pending in the upper chamber.

Also, the national and local elections to be held next year will push back even further any deliberation on the Reit bill.

A Reit is an organization similar to an investment firm but focuses its holdings on real estate investments. A Reit is required to distribute as much as 90 percent of its income to shareholders.

During the Philippine Real Estate Investment Trust forum at the Makati Shangri-La held on Friday, Angara urged the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Philippine Stock Exchange and the private sector to "do their homework early," so that a law allowing Reits could be put in place by the end of next year.

Angara noted that the property boom in the Philippines, boosted by strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers, low interest rates and a buoyant business process outsourcing (BPO) sector, would prop up Reit in the country.

He said that with the strong interest in the property sector, he would not expect another "asset price bubble" with the advent of Reit.

The Philippine Institute for Development Studies, in a research paper in 1997 describes an asset bubble as an economic episode where the price of an asset such as stocks or real estate rises at a speed unwarranted by economic fundamentals. When an asset bubble collapses, it produces an array of losers and precipitate actual and potential bankruptcies.

The Philippine Stock Exchange earlier said it will spearhead a proposal to help legislate incentives for Reit.

PSE officials estimated that the country's P600 billion worth of foreclosed properties could be tapped to start Reit once laws that will govern their activities are enacted. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Apex appeals mining panel decision

APEX MINING COMPANY HAS URGED A REgional panel of arbitrators of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to reconsider its decision to uphold a claim by North Davao Mining Corporation (NDMC) which, Apex officials said, was illegal and void from the start.

Apex, in its motion for reconsideration, said NDMC's application for a financial and technical assistance agreement should not be approved because it is "not based on valid and existing mining claims."

"This judicial mistake will only prolong the already tedious process to return NDMC to the private sector because we will definitely exhaust all legal remedies to protect our interest," the company said in a statement.

Apex and NDMC have overlapping claims and the dispute has been with the regional panel of arbitrators since 1996. Appeals can be coursed through the Mines Adjudication Board, the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court.

"We have a strong case and are determined to take this all the way to the Supreme Court, no matter how long this might drag," a company official said.

Crew Gold Corporation, which owns 40 percent of the shares sold by the Puyat family in Apex, earlier offered to buy NDMC from the government, but was advised to participate in a bidding process conducted by the state-owned Natural Resources Mining and Development Corporation.

The bidding has yet to take place.

In its motion, Apex also said accused NDMC of claiming mining land that was not transferred to it by registered claimants.

GG&A Club Shares
SEC License Broker # 00131 • As of October 9, 2006

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1 100,000	1,000,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,050,000
Anvaya Cove Beach and Nature Club	Please Call	-
Baguio Country Club	500,000	400,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40 000	
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	50 000	
Camp John Hay	-	250,000
Canlubang	500,000	400,000
Capitol Hills	45,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,800 000	1,400,000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	90,000
Club Filipino	95,000	
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	
Forest Hills "A"	100,000	
Forest Hills "B"	100 000	
Forest Hills "C"	190,000	120,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	200,000	170,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	220,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)		11,500,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,500 000
Manila Polo	3,000 000	2,700,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	310,000	-
Manila Southwoods "B"	700 000	Please Call
Manila Yacht Club	280 000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	230 000	160,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	600 000	550,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	180,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	350.000	-
Orchard Golf Club "A"	190.000	160 000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	350 000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	380.000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	170.000	125.000
Spa & Lodge	550.000	500 000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,400,000	1,150.000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,150 000	1,800,000
Subic Bay Golf	200,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	320,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	650,000	600.000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	620,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	-
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200 000	150,000
Valley Golf	230,000	180,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	-	6,200,000

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Tax collection up in six cities

From page B6

"Sixteen of Mindanao's 27 cities are taking part in the TAG project," Rood said. "If we can expand coverage outside the region, I hope we could bring this to the Bicol region or the provinces of Samar and Leyte."

According to the International Finance Corp. and World Bank's Doing Business 2007 study, the country ranked 126th out of 175 economies based on reforms related to business regulations and processes.

An earlier poll of the Social Weather Stations called Survey of Enterprises on Corruption showed that a third of respondents-the biggest group-said they were asked for bribes when transacting for local government permits and licenses.

Other respondents said they were asked for bribes related to national government permits and licenses (29 percent); income taxes (29 percent); import regulations (22 percent); government contracts (18 percent); collecting payments from government (16 percent), and availing of government incentives (11 percent).

G&W Clubshares
As of October 9, 2006
SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	1,050,000/1,200,000*	
Alta Vista B/Corp.*	-	Pls. Call/300,000*
Baguio Country Club	500 000	Pls. Call
Camp John Hay	Pls. Call	250,000
Canyon Woods	100 000	-
Capitol Hills	45 000	
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Celebrity Sports	Pls. Call	90,000
Club Filipino	100 000	
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	200,000*/350 000**	Pls. Call*
Eastridge A/B*	Pls. Call	-
Evercrest	55,000	
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	100,000/150,000*	Pls. Call*
Luisita Golf	Pls. Call	300 000
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	12 000 000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	11,800 000
Manila Polo	2,900 000	2 700,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	Pls. Call*	300,000
Makati Sports Club	210 000	170,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	280 000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160,000	-
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls. Call	Pls. Call/550,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	180 000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	190,000/Pls. Call*/350 000**	160,000
Punta Fuego	400 000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150 000	Pls. Call
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/100,000*/250 000**	Pls. Call*
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Royale Tagaytay CC	66 000	
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150,000**	
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,250 000	1,800,000*
Subic Golf	190 000	
The Palms Country Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Tagaytay Country Club	320 000	
Tagaytay Highlands	650 000	
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls. Call	
The Country Club	2,000 000	
Tower Club A/B*	150,000/180 000*	
Valley Golf	220 000	
Valle Verde Ind.	100 000	
Wack Wack Golf	Pls. Call	6,700 000

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 6, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	3,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	41.5	42	41	42	2,678,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59.5	59.5	58	58	957,400
China Banking Corp.	640	640	640	640	4,480
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	1,660,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	66	66.5	66	66	76,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	41	42	41	42	1,361,300
Philippine National Bank	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	5,700
Phil. Savings Bank	42.5	43.5	42.5	43.5	13,400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	18	18	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	51	52.5	51	52.5	161,800
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45	45	45	3,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	170,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	5.4	5.6	4.65	4.95	3,416,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	5,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1580	1610	1580	1610	1,020
Pci Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	272,000
Sun Life Financial Inc	2000	2025	2000	2025	400
Ivantage Corp.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	1,055,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	50	50.5	49.5	50.5	1,157,500
First Phil Hldgs Corp	51.5	51.5	51	51	533,800
Manila Electric Co. A	21.25	21.25	20.75	21	240,100
Manila Electric Co. B	31	31	30	30	618,900
Manila Water Co. Inc	9	9.1	8.9	8.9	2,459,000
Petron Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.1	3,095,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	950,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.02	1.02	1	1.02	60,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	136,000
Bogo Medellin Milling Co.	18	18	18	18	1,800
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.5	22.75	22.5	22.75	57,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	37.5	38	37	37.5	1,358,400
Rfm Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.91	0.91	480,000
Roxas Holdings, Inc.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.6	325,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65.5	65	65.5	153,300
San Miguel Corp. B	77.5	77.5	77	77	228,600
Phil Tob Flue Cur & Redry	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	15,600
Universal Robina Corp.	20	20	19.5	19.5	4,851,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,720,000
Engineering Equip. Inc	1.94	2.04	1.94	2	3,793,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.52	107,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.6	2,201,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	11,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.54	1.62	1.54	1.62	249,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	4.95	5	4.8	4.8	992,000
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	28,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	20,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.59	0.62	0.59	0.6	43,140,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2	2	2	2	22,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.14	0.14	4,910,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	472.5	505	472.5	495	402,550
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.4	5.6	5.4	5.6	655,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.026	0.027	0.026	0.027	4,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.16	2.2	2.16	2.18	685,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	880,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	3	3.1	3	3.1	138,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	29,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.3	72,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.34	1.38	1.3	1.3	16,062,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	4.05	4.2	4.05	4.15	5,253,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	20,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.75	2.75	2.7	2.7	3,358,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.26	1.3	504,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	6.8	6.8	6.7	6.8	1,132,000
Keppel Holdings	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	7,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1,000
Medco Holdings	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	300,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	1.68	1.78	1.56	1.56	25,865,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	10,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	710,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	1,630,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.13	0.13	580,000
SM Investments Corp.	257.5	260	255	260	578,770
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,400,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	14.25	14.5	14	14.25	13,578,400
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.35	0.36	0.35	0.36	140,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	1,878,000
A Brown Company Inc.	1	1.1	1	1.02	718,000
Crown Equities Inc	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.34	1,180,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3	3.1	3	3	2,442,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.32	1.46	1.32	1.44	138,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.32	1.4	1.32	1.4	150,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.53	0.55	0.53	0.55	14,240,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	500,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	4,500,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.64	1.68	17,642,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.1	0.16	0.1	0.16	410,000
Interport Res.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	20,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	10,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	1	1.12	1	1.12	40,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1,100,000
City & Land Developers	1.74	1.74	1.6	1.6	61,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.72	0.78	0.72	0.74	9,120,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.94	1.96	1.9	1.94	29,039,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	3.35	3.4	3.3	3.35	246,000
Mrc Allied Ind. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	130,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	200,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.6	1.84	1.56	1.56	177,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	14	14	13.5	13.5	26,528,100
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	1,570,000
SM Development Corp.	1.82	1.84	1.82	1.82	487,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.5	8.6	1,912,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	17.5	18	17.5	18	302,600
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1	1	1	1	110,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Information Capital Tech.	5.2	5.2	4.5	4.8	50,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.36	1.44	1.36	1.4	75,057,000
Globe Telecom, Inc.	1155	1155	1140	1145	252,960
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	4.75	4.8	4.7	4.75	1,689,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2225	2225	2180	2180	467,280
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	1,400,000
Ionics Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.96	1.98	352,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.045	0.045	0.045	0.045	1,000,000
Ism Communications Corp.	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	2,300,000
Philweb Corp.	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	153,700,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	3.5	3.7	3.5	3.7	89,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	135,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	17.5	18.75	17.5	18.5	352,200
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc	0.96	0.96	0.96	0.96	40,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	30,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5	5.1	5	5.1	1,288,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	2	2.02	1.98	2	3,975,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	47,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	20,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9	5,000
Ipeople, Inc	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	32,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp	2.04	2.04	1.96	2	668,000
Paxys, Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12	825,800
Prime Gaming Phils. Inc.	40	40	40	40	900
Philippine Seven Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	5,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	6.1	6.1	5.7	5.9	1,600,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc B	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	1,645,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	72,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev'l	8.1	8.1	7.8	7.9	542,000
Benguet Corp. A	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	13,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.235	2,630,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.27	1,020,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.022	0.02	0.021	1,367,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.025	703,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	102,000,000
Philex Mining Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.55	3.65	3,280,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	19	19.25	18.75	19.25	129,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.43	270,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.57	740,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,900,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.01	145,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	65,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.97	0.97	0.96	0.96	370,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	20,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	9.5	9.5	9.2	9.2	149,000

CURRENCIES

October 6, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.787650	1.000000	50.0400
Japan	Yen	0.006697	0.008502	0.4254
United Kingdom	Pound	1.480230	1.879300	94.0402
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.101152	0.128422	6.4262
Switzerland	Franc	0.629314	0.798977	39.9808
Canada	Dollar	0.699946	0.888652	44.4681
Singapore	Dollar	0.497253	0.631313	31.5909
Australia	Dollar	0.586267	0.744325	37.2460
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.089423	2.652731	132.7427
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.210017	0.266638	13.3426
Brunei	Dollar	0.495689	0.629327	31.4915
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000109	0.0055
Thailand	Baht	0.020965	0.026617	1.3319
UAE	Dirham	0.214460	0.272279	13.6248
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.269600	63.5308
Argentina	Peso	0.253876	0.322321	16.1289
Brazil	Real	0.364400	0.462642	23.1506
Denmark	Kroner	0.134141	0.170306	8.5221
India	Rupee	0.017273	0.021930	1.0974
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213832	0.271481	13.5849
Mexico	New Peso	0.071474	0.090744	4.5408
New Zealand	Dollar	0.522383	0.663218	33.1874
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013014	0.016523	0.8268
South Africa	Rand	0.100994	0.128222	6.4162
Korea	Won	0.000830	0.001054	0.0527
Sweden	Kroner	0.107905	0.136996	6.8553
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023807	0.030225	1.5125

US venture capitalists eyeing investments in RP

Philippines among priority overseas destinations due to pool of skilled workers, English proficiency

By Riza T. Olchondra

AN INCREASING NUMBER OF VENture capitalists in the United States have either invested or are exploring ways to sink money in the Philippines' information and communications technology (ICT) market, according to Philip Bond, president of the Information Technology Association of America.

Bond said in a videoconference during the BizOps07 forum last week that according to studies in the United States, 53 percent of venture capitalists still prefer to invest in their home country.

However, of the 47 percent who are either already invested or looking to invest overseas next year, more than half were looking at China, India and other Asian countries, such as the Philippines, for their next big venture.

"In the Philippines, you have price-competitive and skilled workers, high English proficiency, a growing telecommunications industry and the advantage of having part of the Transpacific cable system (linking the region to the rest of the world)," Bond said.

"We in the United States are acutely aware of the progress that you have been making."

To take advantage of heightened interest in the local information and communications technology market, Bond said the development and export of software and IT services could be key.

He cited India as an example, saying that the country had started developing and exporting software even before there was overseas demand.

Today, its ICT companies are earning from local demand as well.

"Software and IT services are at the heart of critical areas and technological innovation and these must be developed with better security (in order to attract capital)," Bond said.

He also highlighted the benefits of developing software and IT services geared toward saving customers sourcing and project implementation costs.

He said the total savings in global sourcing alone, brought about by Internet-accessible information and internationally accessible customer care services, amounted to $8.7 billion.

The figure is expected to balloon to $20 billion in 2010.

Those savings are the seeds for the next round of innovation and the markets that can provide such savings stand to gain, including the Philippines, said Bond.

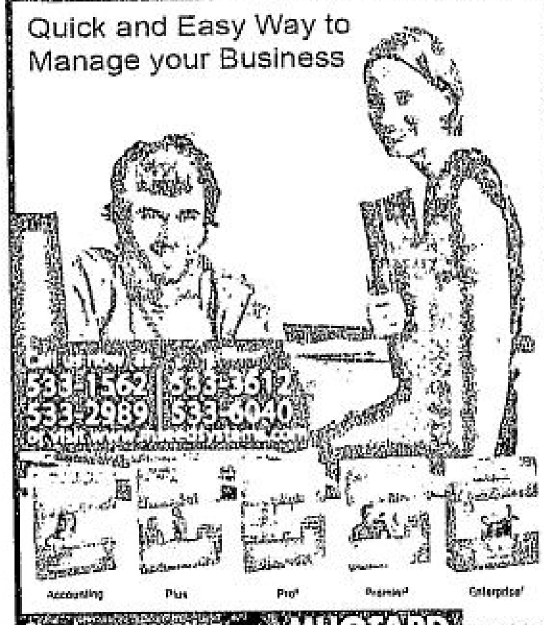
He cautioned, however, that global sourcing and technology-driven ventures results in market changes, among them the loss of job security in some sectors even as other labor sectors develop.

Information security and privacy issues also come up during discussions, prompting the need to address data security.

For the Philippines to overcome such challenges, Bond urged public and private entities to encourage ICT discussions and fund research and policy support.

Bond also recommended that the government learn from ICT-focused governments in Asia, establish an effective system for protecting intellectual property as a way of encouraging innovative ideas, and address taxation and free trade issues.

"The key is engagement," said Bond.



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PAL urged to resume Baguio flights

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—THE CITY COUNCIL HAS passed a resolution urging Philippine Airlines and other major domestic carriers to resume flights to this city.

Only Asian Spirit continues to service tourists and residents bound for Baguio.

The Baguio Tourism Council prodded the city legislators to make the request, after their efforts to persuade top airlines to operate here had failed, said Councilor Perlita Chan-Rondez.

But military pilots and officials of the Department of Transportation and Communication said having more flights to the city would not be possible because of Baguio's weather.

Brig. Gen. Nicomedes Corpuz, assistant superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy and an Air Force pilot, told members of the Presidential Management Staff last week that flight schedules to the city were restricted to the early morning hours because fog almost always blankets the mountains by noon or early afternoon, regardless of the season.

Alfredo Mondiguing, DOTC Cordillera director, said local officials must also consider the state of the Baguio airport.

Expansion plans that include extending the runway had been put on hold because of the government's failure to clear the area of squatters, he said.

Councilors Edilberto Tenefrancia and Galo Weygan said getting PAL and other airlines to operate here would require a solution to Loakan airport's state of "unmarketability."

Chemrez sees more revenues from biodiesel

By Abigail L. Ho

LISTED FIRM CHEMREZ TECHNOLOGIES INC., formerly Corro-Coat Inc., expects its biodiesel business to eventually account for half of its revenues and 66 percent of its gross profits.

In a report dated Oct. 5, CitisecOnline's Carl Sy said biodiesel would be Chemrez Technologies' main growth driver, particularly with the expected passage of a law mandating the use of biodiesel and bio-ethanol.

"Corro-Coat is positioning itself to become a biodiesel powerhouse. Going forward, its biodiesel arm will be the main growth driver," he said. "The other chemical businesses will have little impact on the bottom line compared to biodiesel."

Corro-Coat is the market leader in the manufacture and distribution of powder coatings.

The company earlier this year entered into a share-swap agreement with affiliate Chemrez Inc., a biodiesel producer, which effectively made Chemrez a wholly-owned Corro-Coat subsidiary.

The company name was changed to Chemrez Technologies.

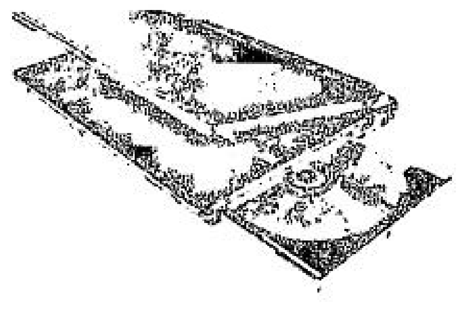
Under the agreement, the company will also acquire the biodiesel plant of its parent, at cost.

"The biodiesel plant to be acquired is a very versatile manufacturing plant that is capable of manufacturing a wide variety of chemical products," Sy said in his report.

Chemrez has a P650-million biodiesel facility in Libis, Quezon City, that can produce 60 million liters of biodiesel a year.

The company has set its sights on putting up an even bigger production plant, one that will cost P1.5 billion and can produce 180 million liters of biodiesel annually.

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE INFINITE FUJITSU



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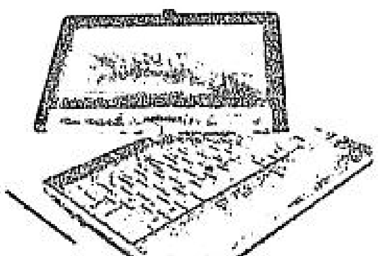

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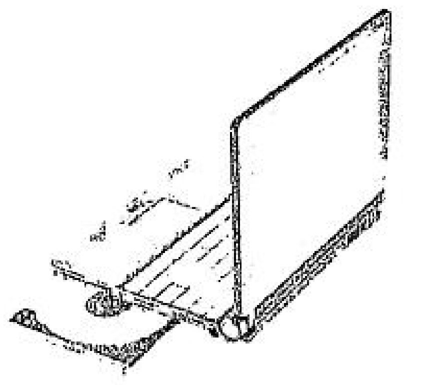

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PBM operates on 135 cleft kids

THE PHILIPPINE BAND OF MERCY (PBM), an institution that attends to indigent Filipinos suffering from cleft lip/palate and other diseases like cataract and glaucoma, successfully pulled off free cleft/lip palate operations in line with the 28th National Disability Week.

PBM, with the support of its accredited partner hospitals, held nationwide cleft surgical missions during the week of July 17 to 23. A total of 135 children with cleft deformities were operated; 78 in Metro Manila, 50 in Luzon, and 7 in Mindanao.

Before engaging in cleft lip/palate operations, PBM conducted a one-day mass cleft screening mission July 1 for 150 clefts residing in Metro Manila and nearby municipalities. Facilities for physical examinations and laboratory tests were made available in the PBM office through the participation of volunteer plastic surgeons and pediatricians from The Philippine Association of Plastic, Aesthetic, and Reconstructive Surgeons, FEU-Nicanor Reyes Memorial Hospital, and the Mobile Laboratory Clinic of SM Foundation.

Presently, PBM is engaged in a tieup with Smile Train USA, an organization dedicated to help millions of children around the world suffering from cleft lip/palate, vowing to sponsor the operation of 1,000 children with cleft lip/palate deformities. The institution is aiming to maintain and broaden its hospital network and to pursue some business activities to augment its funds.

For more information, log on to www.philbandofmercy.org or call 928-8539 or 928-8566, or visit the PBM office at 22 East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

'PHILIPPINES 21 YOUNG LEADERS FORUM'

The Philippines 21 Young Leaders Forum was held Sept. 21 and 22 at the Hyatt Hotel & Casino, Malate, to prepare the earlier selected 10 most promising young leaders of the Philippines for the 'Asia 21 Young Leaders Forum' in Korea. The international conference in Seoul, Korea is organized by Asia Society with the aim to provide an international platform to young leaders from Asia and the United States for interacting and sharing their unique perspectives on issues of common concern. The 'Philippines 21 Young Leaders Forum', an initiative of Asia Society Philippines Foundation with major sponsor the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp, brought together the 10 selected young leaders with resource speakers to discuss various issues concerning the Philippines and the Asia-Pacific region, such as education, governance, and leadership. The 10 selected young Filipino leaders who will represent the Philippines in Korea are: David Bercasio, executive director, Naga City People's Council; Eugene Castillo, musical director, Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra; Marie Sol Delantar, program director, Ayala Young Leaders' Congress; Dr. Maria Corazon De Ungria, head, DNA research laboratory, University of the Philippines; Maj. Dennis Eclarin, founder and president, Hometown Corp; Ariel Hernandez, executive director, Balay Mindanaw Foundation; Martin Emile Lopez, founder and president, Sinagtala Foundation; Theresa Anne Manalastas, development officer, Synergeia Foundation; Lea Perez Marasigan, program officer, Sibikong Kabataang Pinoy Inc, and; Rep. Gilbert Remulla of the 2nd District of Cavite. Supporting partners of the Philippines 21 Young Leaders Forum were the Philippine Daily Inquirer, ABS-CBN News Channel (ANC) and SMART Communications Inc. For more inquiries, call Michelle Javellana, national secretariat, at 723-3013 or e-mail philippines21@gmail.com. Shown from left are Eclarin, Lopez, Bercasio, Remulla, Hernandez, Delantar, Marasigan, De Ungria, Manalastas, and Castillo.

Bacolod City's Masskara Festival starts

OCTOBER IS THE MONTH OF THE Masskara Festival in Bacolod City, with opening ceremonies held Oct. 1 ushering in the mood for fiesta. A variety of sideshows will unfold in the coming weeks leading to the Masskara Street Dancing parades from Oct. 20 to 21, the major highlight that has claimed a place in the tourism market.

This is the 27th year of the festival, and for the first time, the street dancing shall sway to the beat of an original music composed by local music man Gerry Grey. The Masskara Street Dance Music is a seven-and-a-half minute piece that arranges the beats of seven continents to reflect the theme, "Masks of the World".

The street dance competition will have a three-day-run: Oct. 20 for the schools; Oct. 21 for the barangay teams; and Oct. 22 for the open category. Competition among the barangay teams is expected to be the most hotly contested, with choreography and costumes guarded like a state secret, Rudy Reveche, head of the Masskara street dancing competition committee, said.

Every year, the street dancing choreography, masks and costumes become more Las Vegas-styled productions. But behind those production numbers are what Reveche calls "village artists who mostly have no professional backgrounds on dance, choreography or costume designs." And yet the street dancing continues to attract crowds, its photographs carried in local and foreign publications.

Another event, the "Majika Masskara", is expected to claim space in the art scene for the local artists. The "Majika" is an art show that "is a multi-media event that will touch all the senses," Charlie Co, a visual artist who heads the committee, said. The "Majika" opens on Oct. 13 and will be open until the end of the festival.

"The artists have been challenged to look beyond the masks in this Majika exhibit," he said. A "parade" of paper mache figures wearing masks; sculptures; paintings; photographs; clay figures; puppets; dances; and a gallery with black walls and the sound of a sinking ship to comment on the Guimaras oil spill tragedy-those art works will claim space in the art scene for the Bacolod artists.

Every night will be a good time to party at the Masskara SM Village. Bands from Manila and the Visayas will provide music to street parties. On Oct. 18, the countdown for the Charter Day of the city will have many bands playing in designated street corners around the city, among them, the Spirit of 67, GreyHoundz and Kamikazee.

What's a fiesta without a beauty pageant? There will be a search for the Masskara Queen, Masskara Super Mom and the Ms Teen Masskara. And for the men, there's the Mr. Masskara Bodybuilder; for the elders, there's the senior citizen coronation night.

More activities will keep everyone entertained: the SMC "Beers of the World" exhibit; "International Parade of Masks"; Volkswagen vintage cars; basketball, volleyball and shooting competitions; raffle draws; concerts.

The festival is run by the Silver Masskara Festival Organization Inc, a group of artists and civic leaders who have been supervising the festival since 2004. It is led by Bacolod City Mayor Bing Leonardia.

AME CELEBRATES 18TH YEAR, INDUCTS OFFICERS

The Association of Marketing Educators of the Philippines (AME) recently celebrated its 18th founding anniversary simultaneously with its induction of the members of the board of directors for SY 2006-2007. Shown first row, from left, are secretary general Elizabeth B. Amaranto, vice president (internal) Carmela M. Ibanez, 2006-2007 president Cynthia A. Abella, vice president (external) Chere' C. Yturralde, treasurer Margarita E. Peros, auditor Alan C. Pagsuyuin, PRO Twinkle M. Amparo, Second row, from left: directors Gerald S. Abergos, Ma. Victoria S. Abergos, Amelia D. Balan, Arvin G. de Leon, Elisa S. Diaz, Edwin J. Loma, Minerva D. Maylem and Evangeline B. Mina.

Vidastat: four years and growing stronger

THERAPHARMA RECENTLY CELEBRATED the fourth anniversary of simvastatin Vidastat, the pharmacoeconomic drug indicated for the treatment and management of dyslipidemia.

Vidastat, which became available in 2002, was one of the first drugs to be launched under the pharmacoeconomics campaign which aims to provide safe, effective and affordable drugs for the treatment of chronic diseases.

"We wanted to help as many Filipino patients by making quality cardiovascular medicines accessible and affordable to all our kababayans," said John Dumpit, Therapharma's general manager. Since the launching of Vidastat, prices of cholesterol-lowering medicine started going down. Because of the astounding success of Vidastat, Therapharma will soon be a launching a new brand of amlodipine. "I assure you dear doctors that this will happen very soon," Dumpit added.

Knowing Therapharma, the new amlodipine will surely be another quality product and will definitely be more affordable. Just like Vidastat, the new amlodipine will be priced by as much as 50 percent less than the originator brand.

With the introduction of pharmacoeconomic brands of medicine, more and more Filipino patients are clamoring for local pharmaceutical companies, especially Unilab, to provide them with effective medicines at a price which they can afford.

Aside from providing patients with effective, safe and affordable medicines, Therapharma is also set on helping other organizations in saving endangered species. To commemorate Vidastat's anniversary, they donated P150,000 to Haribon Foundation in support of some of their reforestation projects.

'CertifyIT!'

"CertifyIT!," the Philippines' tech certification and training event of the year, is back with specialized content on IT Security and Compliance with its theme "Certified, Secure Business". "CertifyIT!" for IT Security and Compliance takes place Oct. 11 to 13 at the Hotel Intercontinental Manila, Makati. "CertifyIT!" for IT Security and Compliance is presented by Cisco and is sponsored by IBM and Microsoft. It is supported by Mcafee, Symantec and ECC International. "CertifyIT! 2006" brings together in one event two of the world's leading information security training and certification organizations, the (ISC)2 (www.isc2.org) and the SANS Institute (www.sans.org). To register, call 725-0625, 721-8506, 726-6235, or log on to www.itpros.ph/certify-It.

PHILIPPINE QUALITY
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FEDDERS KOPPEL WINS 2006 QUALITY AWARDS

Leading HVAC manufacturer Fedders Koppel Inc recently received the 2006 Most Outstanding Airconditioning Manufacturer Award at the recent Philippine Quality Awards ceremonies held at the Manila Hotel Sept. 5. The award was given to Fedders Koppel for having achieved business excellence in the air conditioning category. Awardees are selected using a rigid 7-point criteria patterned after the global Malcolm Baldridge Awards which takes into consideration product quality and service, customer satisfaction, innovative business practices, community contribution, market share, and company sustainability. Selection of awardees was derived from independent market research conducted through actual consumer surveys and focus group discussions using the aforementioned criteria. Fedders Koppel is an ISO 9001:2000 certified company, which manufactures light commercial and packaged products under the Koppel brand. The company is a wholly owned subsidiary of Fedders Corp (New York Stock Exchange:FJC), a leading global manufacturer of air treatment products, including air conditioners, furnaces, air cleaners, dehumidifiers and humidifiers for residential, commercial and industrial markets. Shown is Sec. Roberto Pagdanganan, chair and president, Philippine International Trading Corp, handing the award to Gabby Togado, Fedders Koppel manufacturing and engineering director, and Leo Estallo, sales director.

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
for the
INTEGRATED TREASURY SYSTEM (ITS) PROJECT

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) is conducting a two-stage public bidding procedure for the procurement of an **Integrated Treasury System (ITS)**.

The primary purpose of this turn-key project is the acquisition of a fully integrated, Straight-Through Processing (STP), Real-time and "commercial-off-the-shelf" ITS solution for Front, Middle and Back Office which includes the following components:

- Software application, licenses and other software components (DBMS; APIs; connectors; middlewares; etc.)
- Web-based and Internet enabled for remote access by Branches
- Various technical and development tools

The proposed system should be compliant to IFRS (IAS39) and Basel II among others and be capable to interface with various external systems (Bloomberg, Reuters, SWIFT, etc.) and internal systems (e.g. Deposits, Financial Management System, Data Warehouse, etc.). The proposed solution should also be compatible with the LBP Database Architecture and Operating System.

To ensure the highest degree of fit of the ITS solution to the Bank's requirements, and to effectively manage change, the project scope likewise covers all the requisite software customizations, as well as change management activities like change management planning and communication, the review of ***"As Is"*** processess, business process simplification and improvement, the documentation and training on the ***"To Be"*** processess, organizational change assessment, and assistance in the implementation of the required organizational and process changes.

The project must take into account all related implementation activities and process such as data conversion, systems integration, project management, system development lifecycle, change management, technology transfer (training and documentation), and maintenance and support. Likewise, the solution provider is expected to conduct a post-implementation review at least ninety (90) days, but not to exceed one hundred twenty (120) days, after the system has been implemented in Production, to assess the project performance and the effectiveness of the system.

This is a procurement for **Consulting Services and subject to Public Bidding and Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (85% Technical and 15% Financial)**.

Interested parties may secure the Eligibility and Short-listing Requirements, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Nine Thousand Pesos (P9,000.00) and upon signing of a Confidentiality Agreement**, from **02 October** to **13 October 2006**, during regular office hours (between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.), from:

THE SECRETARIAT
Information Technology - Bids and Awards Committee (IT-BAC)
LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
16th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza
M.H. del Pilar corner J. Quintos Streets, Malate, 1004 Manila, Philippines
Telephone +63 2 405-7123
Fax Number +63 2 528-8588
Contact Person Alan V. Bornas
Head - Technology Management Group
Email Address itbac@mail.landbank.com

The Letter of Intent, the accomplished Evaluation Forms for short-listing (List of Projects, Project Team Information, and Major Requirements Checklist) and the rest of the Eligibility Requirements must be submitted by hand on **16 October 2006, 3:00 p.m.**, to the aforementioned address. Only parties who pass the Eligibility Check shall be considered for short-listing.

The IT-BAC shall draw up a short-list of firms from those who have been determined as eligible, and the number of short-listed firms shall not exceed three (3), in accordance with the following criteria:

- Vendor Experience, Expertise and Capability
- Project Team Qualifications
- Financial Stability
- Support Service Location

The short-listed bidders, upon receipt of formal notice, may secure the Bidding Documents (e.g. Request For Proposal, etc.) from **07 to 09 November 2006**. For all qualified parties, the Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **10 November 2006 (Friday), 10:00 a.m.**, at the aforementioned address.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) is **Forty Five Million Pesos (PHP 45,000,000.00), inclusive of all taxes**, which shall be sourced from the funds of LBP. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.

LBP reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the Eligibility requirements and to this invitation. LBP further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) JOSE C. NOGRALES
EVP/Chairman, IT-BAC

(PDI—Oct. 2 & 9, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
City of Cebu
COMMITTEE ON AWARDS

INVITATION TO BID

The City of Cebu, through its Committee on Awards invites individuals/corporations to bid for the disposal of a City-owned lot described as follows:

Lot No.	:	**Lot 5, Block 16 of the consolidation-subdivision**
Title No.	:	**TCT-4158 Plan Pcs-07-01-000206**
Area	:	**766.50 sq.m.**
Location	:	**North Reclamation Area**

All bids must be accompanied by a bid bond in the form of cash or Manager's Check in an amount equivalent to twenty (20%) percent of the bid amount. Bidders bond of all losing bids shall be returned when the award is decided.

All particulars relative to the Bid Security, Evaluation of Bids and Awards shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of COA Circular 92-386, Rules and Regulations on Supply and Property Management in the Local Governments.

The schedule of activities is as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE	VENUE
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI)	October 6-16, 2006	General Services Office
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	October 23-25, 2006	General Services Office
3. Pre-Bid Conference	October 27, 2006	General Services Office
4. Receipt and Opening of Bids	November 7, 2006	General Services Office

The Committee on Awards will issue Bidding Documents to bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 1,000.00 to the Cebu City Cashier.

The City Government of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) TOMAS R. OSMEÑA
Chairman

(PDI – October 6 & 9, 2006)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Philippines MCPO Box 2102 Tel. No. 893-6001/1320

INVITATION TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS FOR THE PURCHASE OF GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES FROM THE NASULO GEOTHERMAL PROJECT

PNOC Energy Development Corporation (PNOC EDC) is a holder and grantee of a Geothermal Service Contract (GSC) in Southern Negros with the Department of Energy of the Philippines. The said GSC covers the Nasulo Geothermal Project, the "Project".

PNOC EDC wishes to invite interested independent power producers to submit a commercial offer for the purchase of geothermal resources from the Project subject to the terms and conditions contained in the Terms of Invitation (TOI) that shall be provided by PNOC EDC for the Project. The steam available from the Project will be sufficient to supply a power plant of approximately 20 MW capacity.

The TOI for the purchase of geothermal resources for the Project may be secured from the PNOC EDC Corporate Planning Department (c/o Zennia Lazaro) starting October 12, 2006 at P1,000.00 per TOI.

For the purpose of clarifying certain provisions in the TOI, a pre-auction conference shall be held on October 25, 2006, 10:00 am at the BAC Room, 1st Floor, PNOC EDC Building V.

Sealed commercial offers shall be received by the PNOC EDC Corporate Planning Department, 3rd Floor, Building V, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, not later than 2:00 pm of December 12, 2006.

PNOC EDC reserves the right to reject any or all the submitted commercial offers or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to select any commercial offer considered most advantageous to PNOC EDC.

(Sgd.) Corporate Planning Manager

(PDI – Oct. 9, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
BUTUAN CITY WATER DISTRICT
Gov. Jose A. Rosales Avenue, Butuan City
Tel. # (085) 342-3145 / 46
Fax # (085) 341-5008; 815-1268
email address: bcwd2@skyinet.net

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BUTUAN CITY WATER DISTRICT through its 2006 Approved Budget intends to apply the sum of **Php 2,842,000.00** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payment under the contract for the supply and delivery of **4,700 pieces Water Meter Insert ½" and Plastic Cover, Non-Reversible Reading, Class B, Dry type, Anti-Magnetic.** Bids in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the Bid Opening.

Bidding will be conducted in accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184. Prospective Bidders should have an experience in undertaking a similar project with amount at least fifty percent (50%) of the proposed project for bidding. Delivery of goods is required by **January 11, 2007.**

The BUTUAN CITY WATER DISTRICT now invites interested applicants to submit to the BAC Secretariat on or before **October 19, 2006** during its business hours, **ten (10) pieces Water Meter Insert ½" and Plastic Cover, Non-Reversible Reading, Class B, Dry Type, Anti-magnetic; Body Length including glass cover: 93.42mm; Upper Chamber: Top portion-77.34mmØ, Bottom portion-69.28mmØ; Lower Chamber: Top portion-65.03mmØ, Bottom portion-58.41mmØ,** which shall be subjected to Calibration and Endurance Tests upon payment of non-refundable Testing Fee of **Php 3,000.00 in CASH.** The BAC will conduct the testing even without the presence of the applicant or his authorized representative, and such result shall be final. Only applicants duly notified that all their samples passed all tests shall be qualified to purchase bidding documents and participate in the bidding.

Specifications, details and bidding documents are available to qualified applicants upon payment of non-refundable Bidding Fee of **Php 2,000.00 in CASH** from date of notification until November 6, 2006 at the BAC Secretariat during its business hours. The Bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective qualified Bidder or his authorized representative.

Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **November 6, 2006** at 2:00 P.M. BCWD Time at the Training Hall, BCWD Administration Building. Submission and opening of sealed bids shall follow on **November 20, 2006** at the same time and venue. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

BUTUAN CITY WATER DISTRICT reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or formality therein, assume no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of their bids, and to accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) JORGE L. GUDUYO, C.E.
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – October 9, 2006)

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- Can work with minimal supervision

NETWORK AND SYSTEMS ENGINEER

QUALIFICATIONS:

- College degree holder in Computer Engineering or Electronics and Communications Engineering
- 1 to 2 years experience in Networking and System Administration
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DIVISION SECRETARY

QUALIFICATIONS:

- College degree holder in Accounting or Business course
- 1 year experience as secretary
- Must have secretarial and administrative skills
- Proficient in oral & written communication
- Knowledge of MS Word, Excel and Powerpoint

ACCOUNTING GRADUATES

QUALIFICATIONS:

- College degree holder in Accounting
- With at least 6 months to 1 year experience in Accounts receivables and/or Credit and collection work
- Knowledge of MS Word, Excel and Powerpoint
- Can work under pressure and with minimum supervision

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St. Luke's int'l symposium on cancer

DOCTORS FROM THE PHILIPPINES AND other Asian countries are expected to converge in Manila on Oct. 19 and 20 for an important gathering that will tackle one of the world's biggest health concerns, cancer.

The First St. Luke's International Symposium on Cancer will bring together Asian medical professionals and the world's leading cancer experts in Edsa Shangri-la Hotel in Mandaluyong City to discuss the latest developments, controversies and approaches in the diagnosis and treatment of two of the most prevalent cancer cases, breast and colorectal cancer.

St. Luke's Medical Center will be conducting this important medical event in coordination with Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC) of New York City, the world's oldest and largest cancer center.

Included in the lineup of top caliber international cancer experts are Dr. Thomas Fahey, SVP of MSKCC; Dr. W. Douglas Wong, Chief of MSKCC Colorectal Surgery; and, Dr. Robert Kurtz, MKSCC Chief of Gastroenterology and Nutrition Service.

Symposium organizers are now accepting pre-registrants at discounted fee. For registration and queries, call the St. Luke's Medical Center customer affairs office through Mylene Capiña at 723-0101 and 723-0301 ext 4122 or 4123, or e-mail corprelations@stluke.com.ph.

OBITUARIES

I am
the
way,
the
truth
and the
life.
No one
comes
to the
Father
except
through
Me.
John 14:6

"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage." ***Psalm 23:4***

BERNABE RUEDA VIOLAGO, JR.

"Bernie" or "Bong"
Former UCPB VP / Area Head
Ateneo HS '65, College '69
ALAGAD Party List Trustee

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 7, 2006

His bereaved mother **Dra. Susana Rueda Violago**; his relatives, UCPB colleagues, Ateneo HS '65, College '69 classmates, and his friends request a little prayer from readers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels at EDSA, Guadalupe, Makati until Wednesday, October 11, 2006 and then shall be brought to San Jose, Nueva Ecija on Thursday, October 12, 2006.

Interment will be on Saturday, October 14, 2006 at San Jose Catholic Cemetery after the 10:00 a.m. Holy Mass.

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DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS

OBITUARIES

Our Dearly Beloved

ERLINDA CONTRERAS SYQUIA

June 20, 1946 – October 7, 2006

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 7, 2006
at Makati Medical Center

*** With Her Loving Family ***
Husband **Senen Syquia**, Children and In-Laws **Roberto** and
Suzanne Syquia, **Erlinda** and **Ronald Caringal**,
Elizabeth Grace and **Clet Ver**, **Carmen** and **Michael Musngi**

Sister **Corazon C. Morillo**
Brother-in-law **Raul R. Morillo**
and children

Brother **Gerry L. Contreras**
and **Victor Nicky Contreras**
and Sister-in-law **Juanita Contreras**

Nephew, Nieces and Relatives

Request the pious readers and friends to pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Her remains lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen, Sanctuario De San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be on Thursday, October 12, 2006 at the Family Mausoleum, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 10:00 a.m. Mass at Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish Church.

Rice imports seen to decline in 2007

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S RICE IMPORTATION IS EXpected to drop by 10-21 percent next year to about 1.3-1.5 million metric tons despite the damages on crops inflicted by Typhoon "Milenyo."

The Department of Agriculture earlier projected that rice production could hit 15.4 million MT. Due to the typhoon, however, production is expected to drop to 15.2-15.3 million MT.

A senior agriculture official said that even with the reduced output projection for this year, importation next year would still be at only about 1.3-1.5 million MT. Rice imports this year were seen to reach 1.65 million MT.

The official said the decline in the fourth quarter output, portion of which would serve as buffer for the following year, would likely be offset by harvests in the first quarter of 2007.

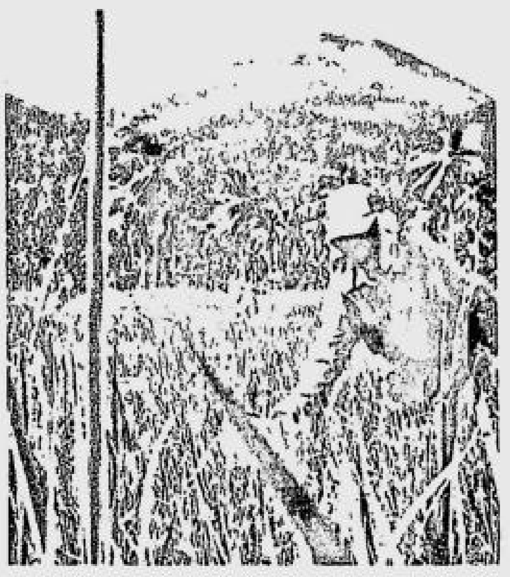
"The typhoon may have reduced our output for the year but we will recover that early next year. We have considered this in determining the volume of our rice imports for next year," the official added.

This year's projected rice production is 5 percent higher than last year's level. The DA attributes the increase to favorable weather condition in the first nine months of the year and the increased use of high-yielding hybrid seeds.

Agriculture officials said Milenyo damaged some P515 million worth of crops.

The country imports rice to boost its buffer stock, which is tapped during the lean months of July to September to ensure stable rice supply and avoid artificial increases in prices.

The Philippines is a major buyer of rice in Asia. It has been working on achieving self-sufficiency in rice by 2009.



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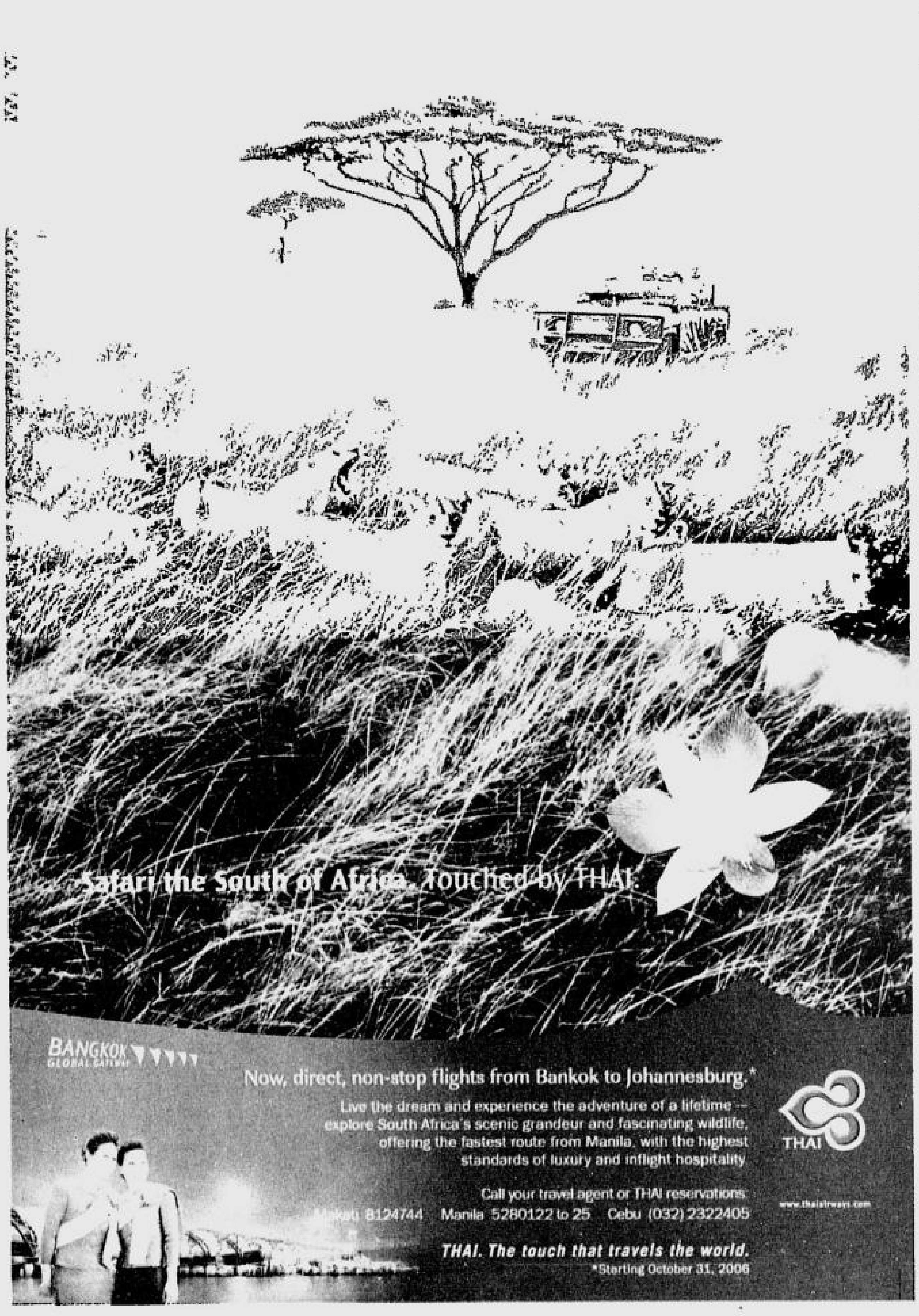

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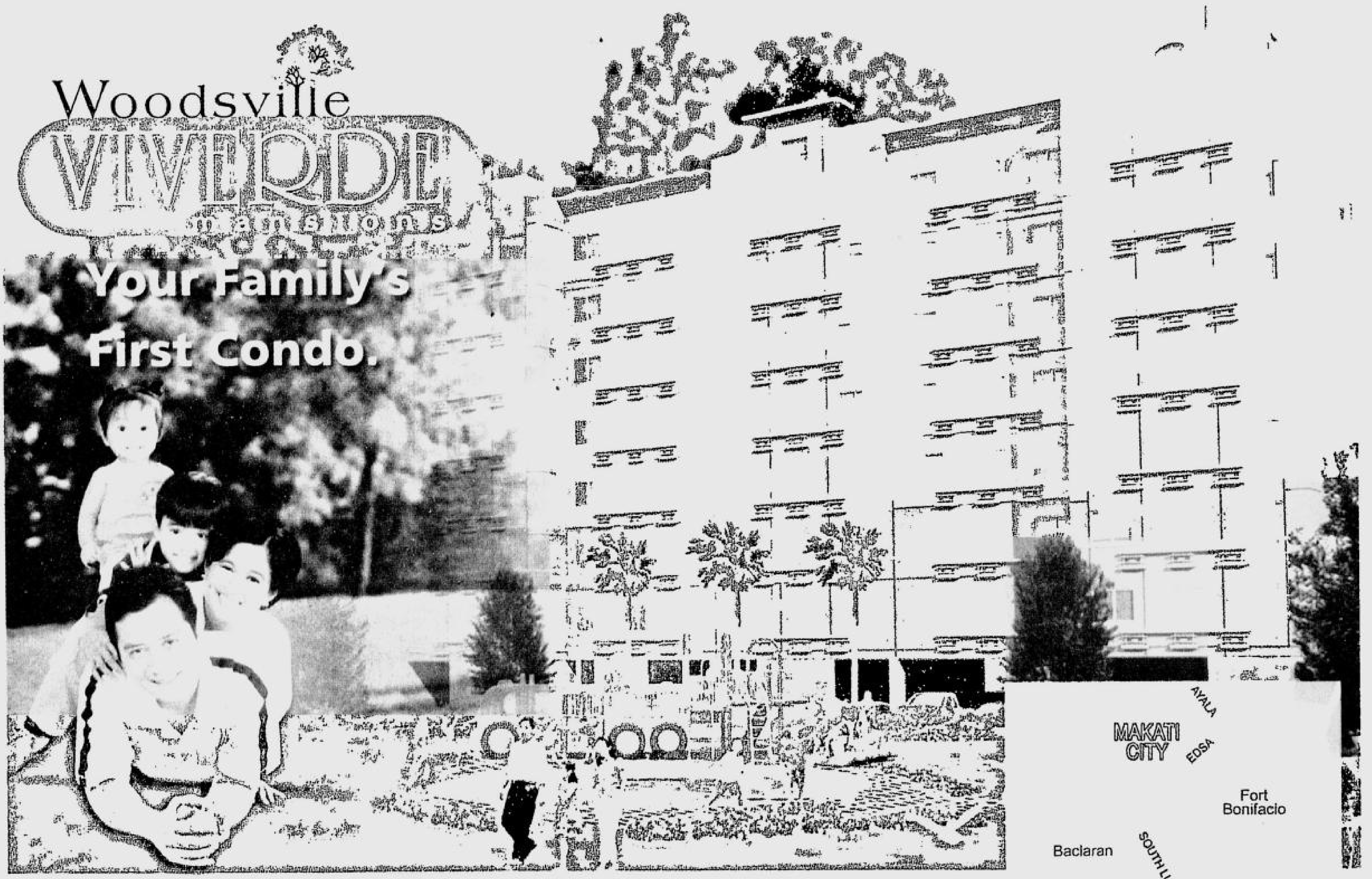

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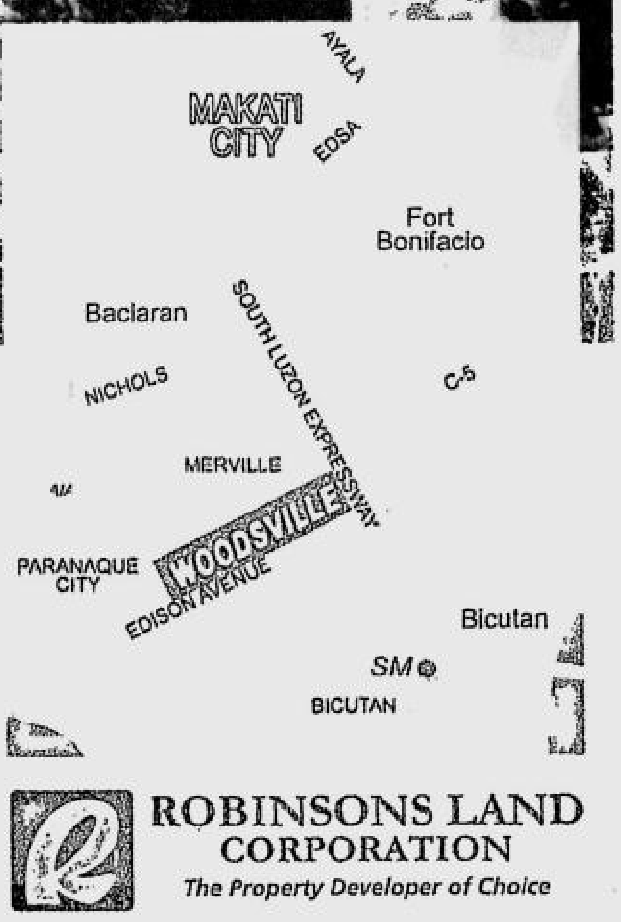

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Two islands blazing trail in tourism

Cebu ahead of the race; neighboring Bohol is fast catching up

By Eduardo A. Morató Jr.
Professor, Asian Institute of Management

TOURISM ON MACTAN ISLAND, CEBU, IS AN aberration.

Forty years ago, Mactan was a sleepy fishing village. A twist of fate, called the Vietnam War, changed all that.

The Americans built an airport on the island as an alternative staging area for its air offensives.

Completed in 1970, the airport made Mactan accessible to international air traffic.

A bridge was built in 1972 to connect populous Cebu to its island appendage and the rest, as they say, is history.

About the only touristy thing happening then in Mactan was the Tambuli Beach Club, a private membership resort.

Boom Fonacier, son of hotelier Anos Fonacier, took over Tambuli in 1979. He converted the place into an upscale resort.

Flow of business

Boom took advantage of his father's Cebu Plaza Hotel, which had been recently erected to serve tourists in the Cebu metropolis.

Other factors helped Boom.

Tambuli was sitting on the northeastern side of the island, the only location with white sand beaches.

Cebu, next to Pangasinan, had the largest provincial population.

It was also the second largest economic center in the Philippines.

Mactan, as the gateway to Cebu, exploited the natural flow of business and tourism from Metro Manila to Cebu.

Mactan airport also became a natural hub for air and sea traffic to the Visayas and Mindanao.

Furthermore, in 1979, the Mactan Export Processing Zone was opened.

This effectively dissected Mactan into the industrial west and the tourism east.

Fast forward to 2006, Mactan boasts of 18 major resorts with a total room capacity of about 1,700. Hotels popped up, importing or manufacturing white sand to beautify the beaches.

On the industrial side, over 100 establishments were set up. This created a huge demand for labor. Job seekers built instant shanties, creating the "third world" of Mactan.

Schizophrenic personality

Sitting side by side, the three worlds of Mactan project a schizophrenic personality. From the tourism point of view, the shanties are eyesores. Boat owners and vendors harass and shortchange the unwitting tourist.

For the politicians, they are precious votes. For the industrialists, they are workers. Zoning has become a serious problem. Peace and order has become another.

Marget Villanueva, a tour operator, suggests ways to improve Mactan tourism.

"We must put a sense of character in the place ... like a theme similar to Bali where our culture and handicraft can be showcased."

For Boom Fonacier, the problem with Cebu and Mactan is "the lack of things to do. There are not enough rooms in Mactan to accommodate two jumbo jets at a time, like other tourist destinations do."

For Dodong Alegrado, owner of Maribago Bluewater, airfare to Cebu is too expensive.

For charter flights, round trip tickets from Europe to Bali cost only $500 versus one way fares to Cebu of $1,200, claims Fonacier.

Infrastructure and utilities are not up to par in Mactan. Roads do not link the resorts together, a sign of bad master planning.

Water is also an issue.

The economic and ecological carrying capacity of the island would definitely be put to the test.

Beguiling island

Meanwhile, across the sea from Mactan is the beguiling island of Bohol.

Tourism is rising steadily in Bohol due to its beach attractions in Panglao, its famous chocolate hills, diminutive and unique tarsier and its centuries-old churches.

They have always been there, but the construction of first class facilities has accelerated tourism tremendously.

Bohol is a roundish island with a circumferential road linking the rustic towns and churches together. It has an exotic appeal and a quaint character.

If the Boholanos can preserve this charm, the province can claim the top tourism prize.

Boholanos are like swallows that keep

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Ninotchka Rosca on IT, women, writing and penguins

ROSCA

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

(Editor's note: For the full text of the e-mail interview, visit the Infotech section of www.inq7.net.)

NEW YORK-BASED FILipino author and feminist Ninotchka Rosca is very busy nowadays.

When this writer caught up with her via e-mail, she was working on a gender analysis of the war in Iraq for the Women's Anti-Imperialist League statement to be delivered on October 28.

She is also busy writing an update for the Women's Media Center website on the final report issued by the Women's Human Rights Delegation of the National Lawyers Guild and the Center for Constitutional Rights. She is also working on a new book.

Rosca is an acclaimed Filipino author and activist who had kept herself busy all these years. A quick check on Google will produce links to different websites, including a Wikipedia entry, which would often list down organizations she's connected with and her accomplishments. She has published short-stories and novels in the US.

A political prisoner under the Marcos administration, she was forced into exile in Hawaii.

These days, she has found time to do a monthly blog, called Lily Pad, for the Gabriela Network USA website (http://ninotchkarosca.blogspot.com/). In fact, with technology and the Internet, she says she is now doing more work since both allow her to become "more and more a citizen of the world."

Here are excerpts from the e-mail interview:

What are you doing now?

I'm trying to work out a gender analysis of the war in Iraq, for the Oct. 28th statement of the Women's Anti-Imperialist League (WAIL/US). ANSWER has called for activities on this day, including a rally and since WAIL is part of ANSWER, it will be marching. It will also join Gabriela Network in commemorating the Philippine Women's Day of Protest with a women's variety theater at the Judson Memorial Church, near the New York University. We have women of different nationalities participating.

I also have to write an update for the Women's Media Center website on the final report issued by the Women's Human Rights Delegation of the National Lawyers Guild and the Center for Constitutional Rights. This website is supported by many feminist icons, including Gloria Steinem, Robin Morgan and Jane Fonda.

Short-term (meaning three-four months): I'm working on a book manuscript based on the ten-year diary of a Filipina housekeeper. It's titled "Undocumented." I'm working on it as fast as I can, to be able to impact the current debates on "illegals." How the diary came to me—well, therein lies a story which shall be told in due time. Suffice it to say that it stopped me from going on to Antarctica to walk with the penguins, who—at that particular moment when I was sick and in a desolate state—seemed to me to be more decent than some people for whom I had accepted inordinate risks. In any case, this domestic worker saved my soul. This is what I'm working on now: very difficult to find the right prose tone, to be naïve and wise at the same time, to track down the epiphanies of her situation from gut level rather than an intellectual level.

Long-term (meaning one year): I still want to go walk with the penguins.

What role does technology play in your work?

It makes for easier work and for more work. IT [information technology] brings messages from all over the world and a ton of requests per day—to speak, to advise, to attend a conference, to clarify a viewpoint, etc. I get approximately 33 e-mails per day and when there's a crisis, that can double, triple. Three days after the collapse of the World Trade Center, I found 186 messages in my e-mailbox from as far away as Australia, Africa. The first phone call which made it through to my residence was from Amsterdam. It was most edifying that people worried about my well-being but of course, I had to reply to each and every message. It was worth it, though.

But easier in terms of research. And easier also in terms of such mechanical stuff as typing, retyping, spell-check, etc. It is also easy to access news from all over the world. And easier, as well, to get irritating messages. I notice that whenever I get into a political debate with a group or groups, there's a spike in the number of pornographic ads and virus attacks on my computer. Well, we can't help it if some people are childish. But certainly easier on the hands and the fingers. I did 55 pages at one seating while working on the JMS book! Can't do that with a typewriter.

If you were given a chance to "fix" this country, what would you do? What would you tell our female president given the chance to speak to her?

National food self-sufficiency is the most fundamental responsibility of any government. Food in the US is so very, very cheap. Based on the minimum wage, a consumer can buy two dressed chickens for one hour of labor. Contrast that to how long a Filipino will have to work to buy the same in the Philippines. So that would be the first thing I would do if I had the power and the means to do so, assure the country: food self-sufficiency. Of course, developing food self-sufficiency entails more basic work: agrarian reform, reduction of areas devoted to cash crops like pineapple (which means throwing out the multinationals), thorough water engineering (which should help with floods as well), an efficient cargo transport system, etc. But a nation able to feed itself cannot be threatened nor pressured by outsiders.

Next to that, justice would be the second most important component of governance since this is the basis of the social contract—that government governs for the greater good.

I have no advice for [President] Gloria [Macapagal-Arroyo]. She chose this inglorious path from a welter of choices and opportunities given her—far more choices and opportunities than the average Filipino. But I do wish someone would rise in the mainstream political field with a modicum of vision for the country—not just greed, self-interest and taking care of one's own.

What inspires you to write? How different is this from journalism?

In my college days, friends used to call me a story-monger—i.e., I was always looking for tales and narratives. That our people, despite everything ignoble and offensive and demeaning that has been done to them throughout history, despite the indifference of the ruling class and government itself to the value of human lives—that our people continue to exhibit a nobility of spirit and generosity truly amazes me. As a KM organizer, I went to one of the slum spots of Tondo, to a house built over a canal and saw a 12-year-old girl trying to feed her baby brother some mashed kamote. I thought then that if I had been in her situation, given no means of escape (no school, no future, no one cared) from that soul-crushing poverty, I would kill myself rather than endure such a life of relentless exploitation. But beings like her continue; I see them every day—mail-order brides, domestic workers, "illegals," etc.—and they teach me every day about the tenacity of life amid death's dominance. That is what inspires me.

But I am a journalist. I write articles for periodicals. I just did one for MS Magazine which has a circulation of about a million. I do not compartmentalize my being as a writer. As a matter of fact, the first thing I used to say when job hunting was: I can write anything. Really.

The Internet has allowed us to communicate via e-mail and do other stuff that we've never imagined 10 years ago. What has the Internet done to your life? Career? Etcetera?"

The Internet enables me to communicate with and to receive news from all over the world. And receive much information that helps me construct and verify the true state of social reality. I think it's made me more and more a citizen of the world. As I said before, it also brings a lot of work. I just finished a report for the website of the Women's Media Center. There's a lot of publishing on the web now. Our website, where I blog, has had 20,000 visitors since we set up the counter—which was a few months ago. In printing terms, those are pretty good book sales.

I must point out that as far as writing technology is concerned, I do not stint on my tools. I must have been among the first few—outside of corporations—to have an electric typewriter. And I've used the computer since 1983.

One important thing that the IT has brought is the integration of graphics and text. The West is just catching up with this concept but Asia has had a long tradition of this, in illustrated manuscripts and the "manga" novels. But the concept inspired me and Christina Ranilo Quisumbing to bring out an illustrated edition of one of my stories "Sugar & Salt." It has just been released by Anvil Publishing in Manila.

And yes, definitely, I will walk with the penguins.

Readership of US news websites increasing

NEW YORK—THE WEBSITES of US newspapers are now attracting almost a third more visitors than they were a year ago, according to research on the rapidly evolving sector.

Newspaper websites averaged more than 55.5 million visitors a month in the first half of 2006, a 31-percent increase over the 42.4 million visitors over the same period a year ago, according to the Newspaper Association of America.

The research, carried out by Nielsen/NetRatings found that more than one in three of all US Internet users were visiting newspaper websites.

Surveys by Scarborough Research further found that newspaper websites had helped increase total readers—combining print and Internet editions—by 15 percent for 25-34 year-olds and 10 percent in the 18-24 year-old age range.

"It shows newspapers' efforts to grow their online audiences is paying off," Randy Bennett, the organization's vice president of audience and new business development, told AFP.

"There's a contingent of people who have not traditionally been heavy newspaper readers, particularly young adults, who are attracted to digital media and are using the newspapers' website," he said.

Total page views for the websites also increased—by 52 percent during the first half of 2006—and in July, 35 percent of all Internet users visited a newspaper website, a 27 percent increase from July 2005, the research found.

"In markets across the nation, newspaper websites are providing a strong draw for younger demographics," the association said in a statement.

Newspapers worldwide are battling to maintain readers and advertising income faced with competition from websites and 24 hour news channels, with most evolving their traditional operations to open alternative revenue streams.

Bennett predicted newspapers would increasingly develop alternative media to appeal to diverse groups of readers and warned that those who failed to offer original content on their Internet editions would suffer in the long run.

"Offering just one product in the marketplace, as newspapers have done traditionally, is just not a viable strategy," he said.

The Newspaper Association of America represents more than 2,000 newspapers in the United States and Canada.

Agence France-Presse

Game publisher expands to online music distribution

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

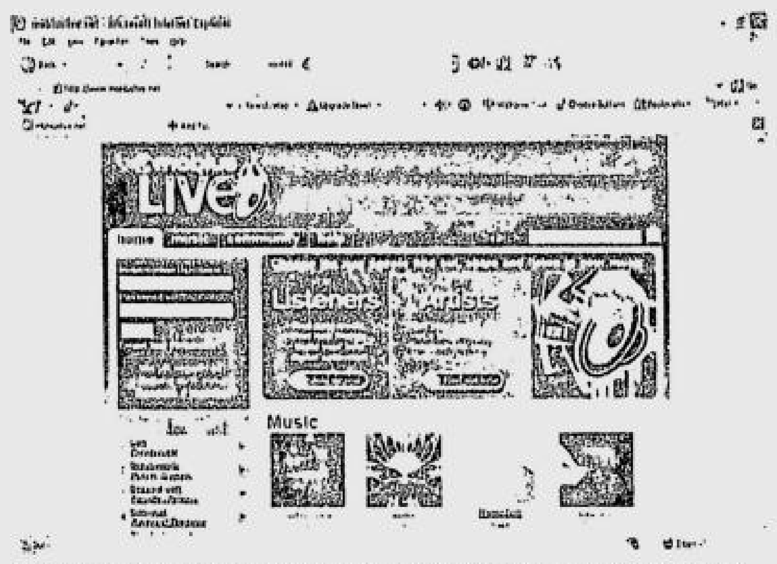
PHILIPPINES-BASED CONTENT provider and game publisher Digital Media Exchange Inc. (dme) is expanding its business to online digital music distribution with the launch of a new service called "mobiuslive" in two weeks, its president told Infotech.

Mobiuslive is like iTunes and mySpace combined, but with a big difference. It uses a home-grown payment platform that allows micro-payments and accepts different currencies, said dme president Jojo Añonuevo in an interview.

The local firm has also signed a deal with Philippine music retail firm Odyssey, which has over 90 outlets in the country.

"Odyssey has seen transition from physical to online retail of music. The company intends to deploy kiosks in their stores all over the country. We've found synergies. Odyssey will become a channel for mobiuslive, and vice versa through these kiosks," the executive added.

Currently in Alpha stage, http://www.mobiuslive.net/ has recently attracted traffic from the United States, Australia and Canada, the executive said.



ONLINE music distribution is now in the Philippines. Will recording labels here also follow the iTunes model and sell songs online?

"Our market research shows gaming and music are complementary. They're both entertainment. Music consumers are gamers also. There is higher growth in the adoption of digital music than online games. Online games are limited by bandwidth, by the number of Internet cafés, while digital music can be downloaded even via dial-up. We feel that this will spur the growth of broadband growth because you don't need high-end graphic cards to download music," he said.

Mobiuslive has signed up at least 200 independent Filipino bands and artists, and the company expects this number to double this soon.

The service will allow people to purchase music online through its online payment system mobiusonline. Dme developed this payment platform as a prepaid system that will allow people to buy even mobile phone loads, game credits, Internet access load, among others.

"We haven't turned on the buy button. In two weeks' time, you can start buying," Añonuevo said.

The executive, however, said the expansion to online music distribution is just the "tip of the iceberg."

"We're not clearly exiting online gaming. But we're expanding our music portfolio and we're reaching out to Southeast Asia," he added.

As an online social networking website, Mobiuslive will also allow people to track friends, become a fan of a band or artist, and soon do auctions. Each song will cost P20 or about 0.40 US dollars.

Dme said Filipino artists will get more than 50 percent revenue-share from songs sold online. Currently, record labels allocate less than 5 percent revenue to their artists, it added.

Thailand interim charter sparks online debate

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

A WIKI WAS CREATED TO DEBATE ON Thailand's interim constitution, the Southeast Press Alliance (SEAPA) said.

A wiki is a website that allows people to easily add and edit content.

"Concern and debate are growing over Thailand's interim constitution," the SEAPA said in a recent blog entry (http://seapa.wordpress.com/2006/10/04/thailands-interim-constitution/).

"The general who led the coup that ousted former prime minister says the charter adequately assures Thais of civil liberties and of media freedom. Many legal experts and academics are not so sure," added the non-profit organization advocating freedom of expression and speech in the region.

The wiki (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2006_Interim_Constitution_of_Thailand) discusses the drafting process, key features and criticisms on Thailand's interim constitution.

The Council For Democratic Reform led by the coup leaders drafted the interim charter after a successful military takeover ousting Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra last month. It was promulgated on October 1, 2006.

"The Constitution allowed the junta to retain significant control over the appointed civilian government and the drafting of a permanent constitution. The CDR would be transformed into a permanent Council for National Security (CNS) and would appoint the head of the executive branch, the entire legislature, and the drafters of a permanent constitution," the wiki entry added.

It added that the draft had come under public criticism since it was "a step backwards from the 1997 People's Constitution."

The interim constitution bans gatherings of more than five people, limits freedom of speech, and political activity.

Among the strictures that will remain in place are a ban on gatherings of more than five people and limits on press freedom, including an order for journalists to report "constructively" and the right of the authorities to censor any reports deemed unhelpful and contrary to national unity, the report added.

Raising standards: The key to competitiveness

MAPping THE FUTURE

Franco G. del Rosario

ON WEDNESDAY, OCT. 11, OVER 500 CEOs and business executives will be converging at the Management Association of the Philippines, Annual CEO Conference at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel to discuss, "Recipes For Competitiveness."

The key to competitiveness is to raise standards. One area outside of business that is extremely competitive is in sports. There are three areas where we can talk about the difference between first and second place in sports.

Many times the difference in performance of the first and second place is small. In some sports events like running, swimming, the difference between the first and second place is a fraction of a second.

Many sports competitors have a disciplined regimen of preparation. Many have identical physical characteristics and level of fitness. This brings to mind that in most cases, it becomes a matter of which athlete raises standards higher.

A triathlon competition

In the case of sixth time Hawaii Ironman Triathlon champion, Dave Scott, his pre-competition training on a daily basis is to bike 75 miles, swim 20,000 meters and run 17 miles, burning 5,000 calories a day.

This man happens to like to eat cottage cheese. But, he rinses the cottage cheese to totally eliminate the excess fat from the cottage cheese. Well, one might think with that if one would burn 5,000 calories a day, what is the big deal about a few calories from the liquid in the cottage cheese?

It probably does not sound so ridiculous if one would imagine Dave's closest competitor in the triathlon had the exact same daily regimen but the only difference between them is he rinses the excess fat while the other did not. One would never know if that in fact would be difference for him winning. This shows that we can never minimize the importance of small things?

So, the difference in performance between first and second place may be small but the difference in effort might be just in small things. Interestingly though, the difference in the rewards between the two is huge.

Let's take three professional sports competition. In the case of the 2004 US PGA golf tournament, the prize money breakdown is: 1st = $1.125M and 2nd = $0.675M. The same disproportionate difference in prize money exists in the 2006 US Open tennis tournament, namely: 1st = $1.2M and 2nd = $0.6M.

In business, "why, who, when, what, how" to raise standards?

Let's take the first question: Why raise standards? US studies showed that most firms operate on a 3 to 4 sigma level. Three sigma level allows for 66,810 defects per million (DPM) units while four sigma level means 6,210 DPM. These studies also showed that when firms moved from a 3 to 4 sigma to a 6 sigma level (3.4 DPM units) the cost of the defects drop from 20 percent to 30 percent of sales to only 1 percent of sales.

Who should raise standards?

The answer is everyone and most critical is the CEO. We should try to hire people that are more passionate about raising standards than others. How would we know? They are basically the people that love what they do.

In the US a professional football player for the Washington Redskins by the name of Darrel Washington, after practically single-handedly winning the game was interviewed after the game by a sports analyst. The question asked, "Darrel, you were unstoppable during the match, how do you do it? This man could only answer in six words, "I was born to play football!"

When to raise standards?

To those that badly want to beat competition, the answer simply is now, constantly and endlessly. For them, it is a lifestyle that consumes us to search endlessly for areas to raise standards.

What standards to raise?

A simplistic answer is: You, Your People, Your Products, Your Services, Your Community Presence.

How to raise standards?

Is it enough to raise standards constantly and endlessly? The answer is no! The answer is raising standards more than others. This is what separates the hard-core and the firm that merely raises standards casually. Just like in the case of Dave Scott, the search for areas in most cases involves raising standards in small things.

How do we find these small things that we can raise standards?

In most cases, it involves challenging conventional wisdom. Being just at par with the competition may make us good. But in this globally competitive world, good is not good enough!

The 7 "Musts" in raising standards more than others

1. Care more than others think is wise.

2. Dream more than others think is practical. Christopher Reeve said, "At first, dreams seem impossible, then improbable, then inevitable."

3. Do more than others think is possible. The famous blind lady, Helen Keller said, "I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; I will not refuse to do the something I can do."

4. Change more than others think is safe. Some people have the philosophy, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." But, contrast this with John Cage, he said, "I can't understand why people are frightened of new ideas I'm frightened of the old ones."

Another reason why people don't change is they avoid taking chances at all times. Ivan Turgenev said, "If we wait for the moment when absolutely everything is ready we shall never begin." The most prevalent reason though for a refusal to change is the fear that changing may result in failure and if they fail they may no longer be loved by people.

5. Be more positive than others. It would be very difficult to raise standards with the belief of a dim future. There is no way to rally people for a better future with a negative attitude. Leaders in a firm that is serious about raising standards need to be unflinchingly, unfailingly optimistic, no matter the situation. Why?

Pessimists see tough situations as temporary while optimists see tough situations as temporary. Pessimism hurts our confidence! Who wants to follow people with no confidence?

Our challenge is to practice strategies to increase optimism. One strategy is to carry positive conversations with ourselves. Why? What we speak about, we can bring about! Our words, our dreams, our thoughts have power to create conditions in our life! Why?

Simply because thoughts become words that become words that become actions that become habits that becomes character that becomes our destiny.

6. Be more creative than others. This includes using creativity to put the "fun" factor in the workplace.

What the creativity does is that it might very well make the firm's competitive strategy as not to compete. In the book of Chan Kim and Renee Mauborgne's, "Blue Ocean," it talks about lasting success comes not from battling competitors, but from creating "blue oceans": untapped new market spaces ripe for growth.

Using dozens of examples-from Southwest Airlines and the Cirque du Soleil to Curves and Starbucks-they urge companies to "value innovation" that focuses on "utility, price, and cost positions," to "create and capture new demand."

Unlike "red oceans," which are well explored and crowded with competitors, "blue oceans" represent "untapped market space" and the "opportunity for highly profitable growth."

The only reason more big companies don't set sail for them, they suggest, is that "the dominant focus of strategy work over the past twenty-five years has been on competition-based red ocean strategies"—i.e., finding new ways to cut costs and grow revenue by taking away market share from the competition.

7. Have fun celebrate small wins along the way.

Lastly, more and more the key to competitiveness for firms would be following what a "pole-vaulter" does; whose goal is not to be the fastest down the track but to jump high enough to clear the bar. Then, do it again, and again, and again each time the bar is raised.

See you all on Wednesday, October 11th at the Makati Shangri-la for the 5th MAP International CEO Conference. Register on line at map.registration.ph or call 751-1149 to 52.

(The author is vice president of Management Association of the Philippines, chair of the MAP CEO Conference Committee, and managing consultant and CEO of Six Sigma Consulting. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

A Leader's Way

From page B2-4

this process?"

Decisions and their implications create a host of new experiences for a leader. The support and encouragement of mentors throughout the process helps a leader to identify opportunities, avoid snares, and successfully navigate change.

5. Awareness of the victories under you

Consistent winning produces victory, and victory generates momentum. Acing past tests of timing inspires hope in making the right choice at the right time in the future.

The Momentum Test—"Is the 'Big Mo' with me?"

The more opposition you expect to a decision, the more important it becomes to act at the right moment. Momentum lends the impetus to win approval for a disputed decision. By pointing to recent success, the leader identifies a credible platform from which to launch into the future.

The Morale Test—"Will this boost morale?"

Leaders have internal barometers to gauge the pressure their teams are feeling. When energy levels are depleted and excitement has ebbed, leaders know not to push for a new project. At the same time, leaders have a knack for knowing when the moment is ripe to rally the troops for the next big initiative.

The 'Stand Alone' Test—"What makes me feel we can be successful this time?"

Leaders learn from the past, but they don't rely on it. The greatest detriment to today's victory is yesterday's triumph. What worked two years or even two months ago, may be obsolete today. Leaders are able to make a compelling case for why success is attainable under present circumstances with existing resources.

6. Awareness of the courage within you

Major decisions are accompanied by major sacrifices. Leaders show resolve in the face of adversity. They have strength to inspire the team to follow through on prior decisions, even when the going gets tough.

The Risk Test—"Is this decision reasonable or reckless?"

A reasonable decision is backed by sound strategy, while a reckless decision relies on luck. Reasonable decisions leave room for error, but reckless decisions lack margin. A reasonable decision rests squarely upon existing strengths whereas a reckless decision blindly hopes for success in the absence of clear-cut strengths.

The Emotional Stamina Test—"Can I handle the heat?"

An old adage says, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen." If a leader is unable to handle the criticism of a decision or unwilling to persevere through trials, he or she shouldn't be in front.

The Passion Test—"Is this a burning desire within me?"

When deciding if the time is right to act, a leader should monitor the depth of desire within their heart. Passion can propel the leader to victory, but a deficiency of desire will doom a project to fail.

The Responsibility Test—"Will I take ownership?"

Decisions to move forward should be delayed until the leader is ready to assume responsibility for their success or failure. Leaders are catalysts to overcome obstacles to success, follow through with diligence, and lead the way to victory.

The Intuition Test—"What is my gut feeling?"

Even after careful preparation, leaders may find themselves stalling a decision. A likely reason: Their conscious mind is reaching a decision that their unconscious mind rejects. Leaders pay attention to their instincts and take them into account during the decision-making process.

(For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2049/2732 and ask for Jesi or Bing. Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell).

Eliminating guesswork in stock trading

WITH THE ADVENT OF ONLINE stock trading, retail investors now have more tools than ever to make informed and intelligent buying and selling decisions on their own.

Web-based stock brokerage firms like CitisecOnline.com aim to help investors quickly identify stocks with potential for growth—aided by the Internet, which has allowed it to communicate easily to clients and which has allowed clients to easily act on the information made available to them.

To simplify the stock selection process for the new investor, CitisecOnline provides a list of attractive buys classified as "Top Picks."

The first online stock brokerage in the country to go public, CitisecOnline is focused on providing first-time investors with relevant guidelines they would need to gain confidence in the market.

Unlike traditional brokerage firms that cater primarily to high net worth individuals, the company believes that expanding participation in the stock market to include middle-income investors will strengthen the industry.

According to Juanis Barredo, CitisecOnline vice president, the language of the company's research is edited to make it as simple and investor-friendly as possible.

Every recommendation is based on a study of a company's fundamentals—earnings and asset growth as well strengths and efficiencies, says April Tan, the company's research head.

CitisecOnline's research strategy uses a top-down approach to investing which assesses prospects from both the macro and the micro perspectives.

Top picks are also based on industries that stand to benefit from the general environment as well as companies that show the greatest investment potential.

CitisecOnline further corroborates its views by using trend analysis which encourages investors to base decisions on market trends.

This marriage between the two analytical approaches enhances the degree of success of its Top Picks.

CitisecOnline caters to various levels of proficiency—from entry level to highly sophisticated.

A big chunk of CitisecOnline regulars are middle-income earners aged between of 26 to 45, who are mostly techno savvy.

CitisecOnline's aim is to expand this base of retail investors.

Two islands blazing trail in . . .

From page B2-1

migrating from but returning to their nests, especially during fiesta season when they are suddenly all there.

They represent the traditional values of the peripatetic but hard working Filipinos who periodically renew ties with their culture on their yearly pilgrimage.

Bohol can project this cultural stamp as "a provincial brand."

To be sure, the local government of Bohol can enhance its positioning in tourism.

Each town can chronicle its history around the churches. Each town can add a more romantic flavor. A butterfly farm can be nurtured in one town, a tropical fish sanctuary in another ... an aviary here, organic vegetables there ... fruit tree orchards of various types somewhere, wild flowers of every hue elsewhere.

To complement this image, Bohol must shun industrial enclaves ... better yet to have spas and wellness centers, even ashrams.

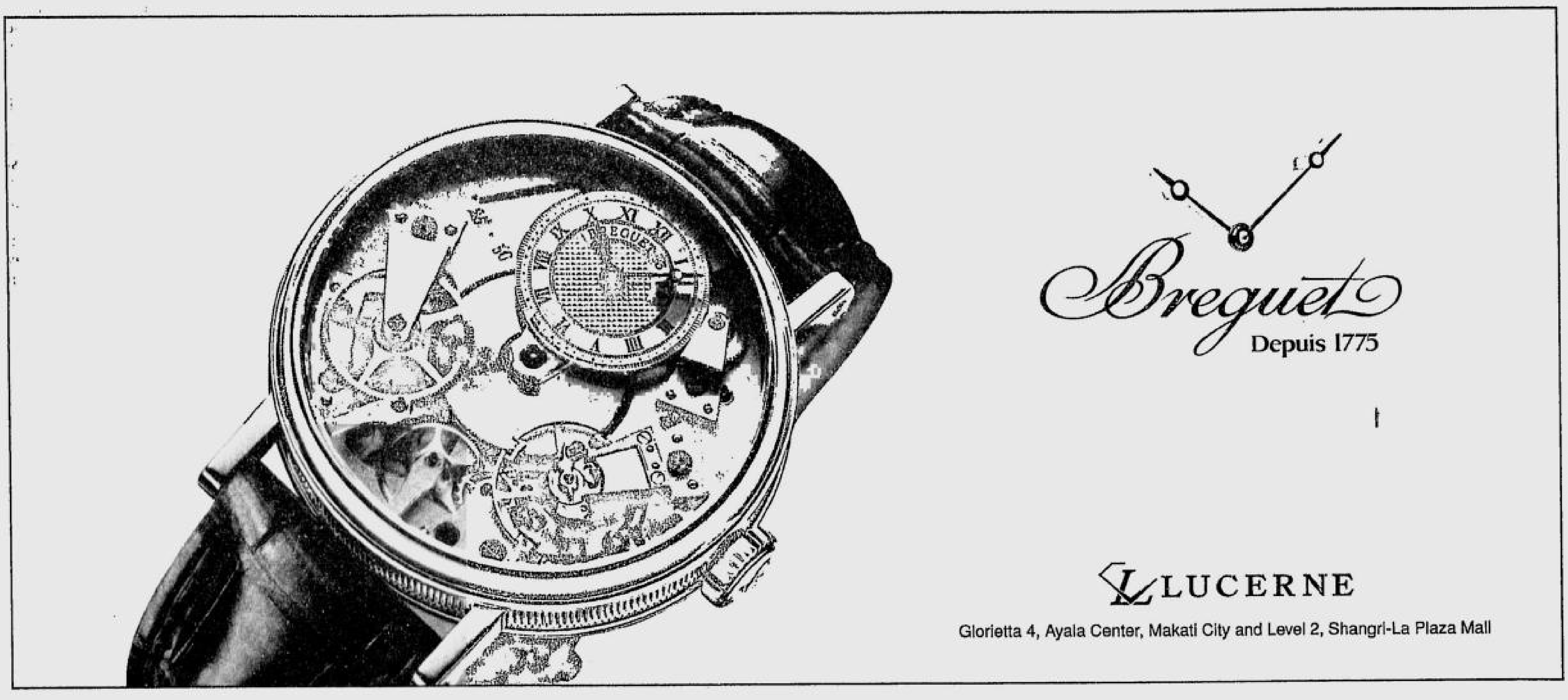
High value agriculture and people-pampering services are the proper complementary combination for Bohol.

Bed and breakfast treats in ancestral homes can dot the tourist road. The three operative words are character, character, character.

Mactan and Bohol are two neighboring islands that may yet tell two different tales, and strategies, on tourism.

Other islands may well learn valuable lessons from them.

Mactan must get its confused act together while Bohol should play out its part "surely and smartly" less it falls greedily into the haphazard development trap.



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Testing of time

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

IN NO SPORT DOES TIMING matter more than the game of golf. The slightest variations in swing speed can dramatically alter the flight of the ball.

Tiger Woods recently captured his 5th consecutive tournament to place him 5th on the all-time list of PGA tournament victories. It's likely he will end his career as the greatest golfer to ever play the game.

Spectators of Tiger Woods are awed by the precision of his swing. The timing of his golf stroke is masterful. Time after time, his shots fall exactly on target, coming to rest inches from the hole after being stuck hundreds of yards from the green.

To the casual observer, the timing of Tiger's golf swing is a gift—not teachable and unexplainable. Yet, no one outworks Tiger on the practice tee. He puts in countless hours fine-tuning the timing of his stroke. Endless backswings and follow-throughs train his muscles to move at the perfect pace in order to control the spin and distance of every shot.

Like Tiger, great leaders seem blessed with supernatural talent to time every movement perfectly. However, just as Tiger must practice his stroke for hours each week, so too, leaders must diligently practice the tests of timing if they are to seize opportune decision-making moments.

In the Sept. 4, 2006 edition of A Leader's Way, we discussed the first three areas of awareness. Here are the last three.

Areas of awareness

Let's recap the first three: Awareness of the needs around you; awareness of the reality before you, and awareness of the influencers behind you.

4. Awareness of the mentors beside you

Leaders make pivotal decisions after consultation rather than charting the course in isolation. Leaders are more likely to master the art of timing when they have tapped into the experience, wisdom, perspective, and intuition of their mentors.

The Example Test—"Would my mentor do this if he or she were me?"

When faced with a first-time decision, leaders enter foreign territory. The terrain may be unfamiliar and the path uncertain. Asking mentors for directions brings a degree of clarity to the unseen trail ahead, and equips the leader with confidence to move forward.

The Belief Test—"Does my mentor believe I can do this?"

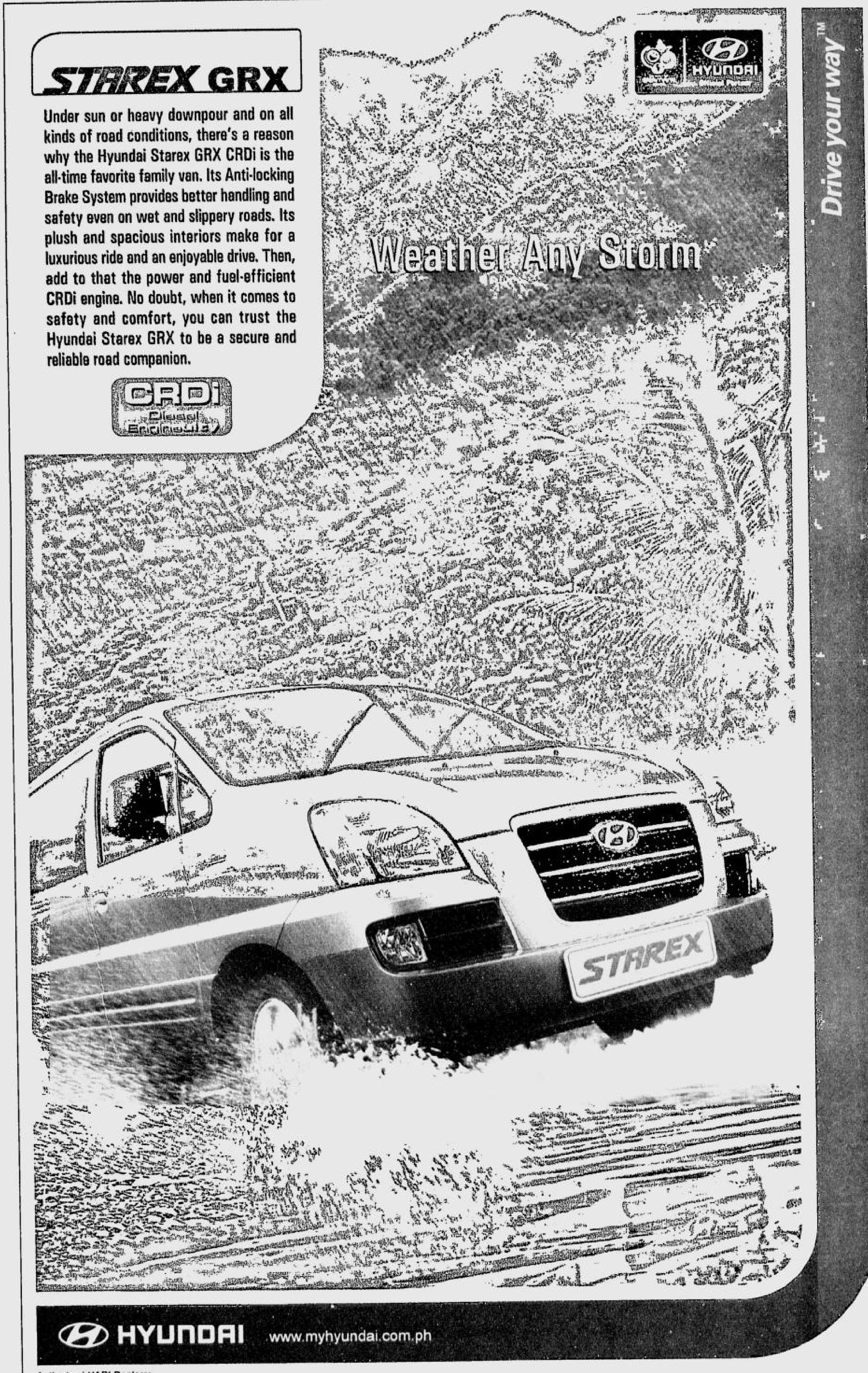
A leader's self-perception may or may not match reality. Optimistic and confident leaders have been known to jump into the water without knowing how to swim. Mentors provide an honest assessment of a leader's fitness level and readiness to take on a new project.

The Experience Test—"Can my mentors teach me from their evaluated experience?"

Seasoned mentors have a wealth of past successes and failures from which wisdom can be gleaned. Leaders find guidance in the evaluated experiences of their mentors and learn lessons of timing without having to pay the price of personal experiences.

The Availability Test—"Will my mentors be with me through

A LEADER'S WAY/ B2-3



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Hyundai wows crowd in Paris Motor Show

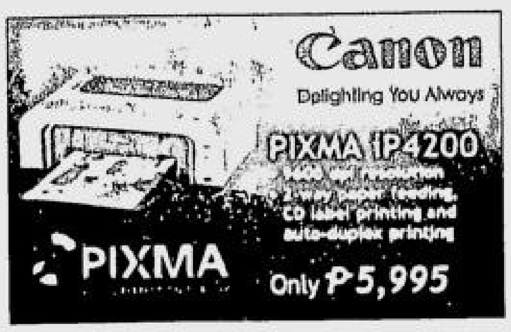
Hyundai Motor Company staged three premiers at its Paris Motor Show press conference last September 28: the elegant and dynamic Coupe, the stunning "Arnejs" codenamed FD, which provides a glimpse of Hyundai's future model in the volume-leading C-class, and a CRDi-powered Grandeur, Hyundai's first application of diesel power in the near-luxury segment.

The Hyundai Coupe (badged as Tiburon in some markets) has sold some 221,708 models worldwide since its launch, of which 73,670 have been sold in Europe. With the new facelift emphasis has been placed upon upgrading the modern and sporty style that attracted so many customers. The new facelift effectively introduces the second evolution of the Coupe, and is designed and destined to capture even more fans.

Launched at the Geneva Auto Salon in 2005, the Hyundai Grandeur marked the company's move into the European executive sedan market. Designed to compete directly against such cars as the Volvo S80, Audi A6 and the Peugeot 607, it introduced new levels of refinement, high build quality and distinctive design to Hyundai's European line-up. As a flag carrier during the Hyundai sponsorship of the FIFA 2006 World Cup, it also made many new friends for the company. The GRANDEUR is now fitted even more closely to the European market with the launch of the new 2.2 VGT common rail direct injection diesel version. In European trim this offers 110kW (150PS) @ 4000rpm and 340Nm torque @ 2000 rpm. It features inter-cooled turbo technology and offers a Euro 4 compliant particle filter. Grandeur retails under the Azera badge in the North American market.

As the designer preview "Arnejs" suggests, Hyundai's up-coming "FD" C-segment vehicle will feature up-to-date technology and a very appealing design to compete with the volume C class models of major European car manufacturers. Led by Chief Designer Thomas Burkle, the Hyundai Motor European design team in Russelsheim, Germany, based the Arnejs on the development plans for the production vehicle. Its form language is a continuity of design elements first introduced with the Genus concept, which were further developed in order to create a strong brand identity. With the FD Hyundai expects to take another quantum leap, boosting sales and market share in the next years. Hyundai plans to launch the FD in late spring of 2007.

ADVT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Fiesta, the yearly Spanish cultural festival, is highlighted again by a filmfest which is Southeast Asia's biggest showcase of Spanish and Latin American movies

FILIPINO director Gil Portes' "Barcelona," starring Luis Alandy and Alessandra de Rossi, will be shown this week at Greenbelt 3.

PELICULA IS THE BIGGEST showcase of Spanish cinema in Southeast Asia.

This year's edition offers 23 films from Spain and Latin America at Cinema 1 of Greenbelt 3 until Oct. 15. Cineastes will be treated to movies ranging from comedy to heart-tugging love stories from multi-awarded Spanish and Latin American filmmakers.

Goya prizewinner "Princesas," the latest opus of director Fernando Leon de Aranoa, was the main headliner on opening night. "Princesas" is a dramatic tale about the friendship of two prostitutes plying their trade in the streets of Madrid.

Other notable films in the lineup include "Elsa Y Fred" and "No Sos Vos, Soy Yo" from Argentina; "Machuca" from Chile; and "El Calentito," "Volando Voy," and "Ninette" from Spain. The last is the latest film by director J.L. Garci, whose "El Abuelo" was nominated for Best Foreign Language Film in the Oscars.

The festival is highlighted by the world premier of Gil Portes' "Barcelona." Tickets are at P50.

Below, some Filipino poets provide insights on some of the festival movies.

Poets on 'Peliculas'

Flesh trade in Madrid

By Vicente Garcia Groyon

'Princesas' (2005)

PROSTITUTION IN Madrid is given a gritty and tender treatment by Fernando Leon de Aranoa.

The film's largely unstructured storyline follows two hookers—one native Spanish and getting older, the other a younger Latin American illegal immigrant—as they deal with the hazards of work, confront family issues, and tentatively, cautiously attempt non-commercial romances.

Its power comes primarily from the strong performances of the two leads. Candela Peña's Cayetana ably treads the line between toughness and vulnerability. At 30, she is on the cusp of discarding her youthful hopes and dreams, and we see her making a few final desperate attempts to keep them.

The background of Zulema, played by Micaela Nevarez (a leggy, regal stunner), does not allow her the luxury of idealism. She quickly realizes that all things come at a price, and is no longer able to accept anything that comes free.

"Princesas" manages to reveal the sadness and disappointments of these women's lives without slipping into bathos or melodrama. The ability to hold despair at bay is crucial to their survival, and the film manages to flit lightly through the random happy moments of their lives (as when a troupe of prostitutes takes a joyride in a chauffeured limousine) while never allowing us to forget that tragedy and evil lurk constantly in the shadows.

This is not the sun-splashed, affluent Madrid of the imagination, but something much grimmer. The digital videography (by Ramiro Civita) conjures a drab, arid urbanscape in which the outfits of hookers trawling the dusty back roads of the city provide the only flecks of color and light. In this environment, class and race are revealed to be as imaginary as the fading hopes that these women cling to.

One listens to Caye's wishes for a man who will pick her up after work every day, and her stubborn belief in the sudden detours into good fortune that life can make, and one understands that for her and Zulema, there can no longer be anything for them but the shadow world that they inhabit. There is the option to leave for the light, but only at great cost, and only at the risk of finding nothing there.

"Princesas" was the opening film of Pelicula on Oct. 7.

Vicente Garcia Groyon teaches Film and Communication at De La Salle University. His novel, "Sky over Dimas," received the grand prize for the novel in English in the Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, and the National Book Award for Best Fiction.

PELICULA/ C2

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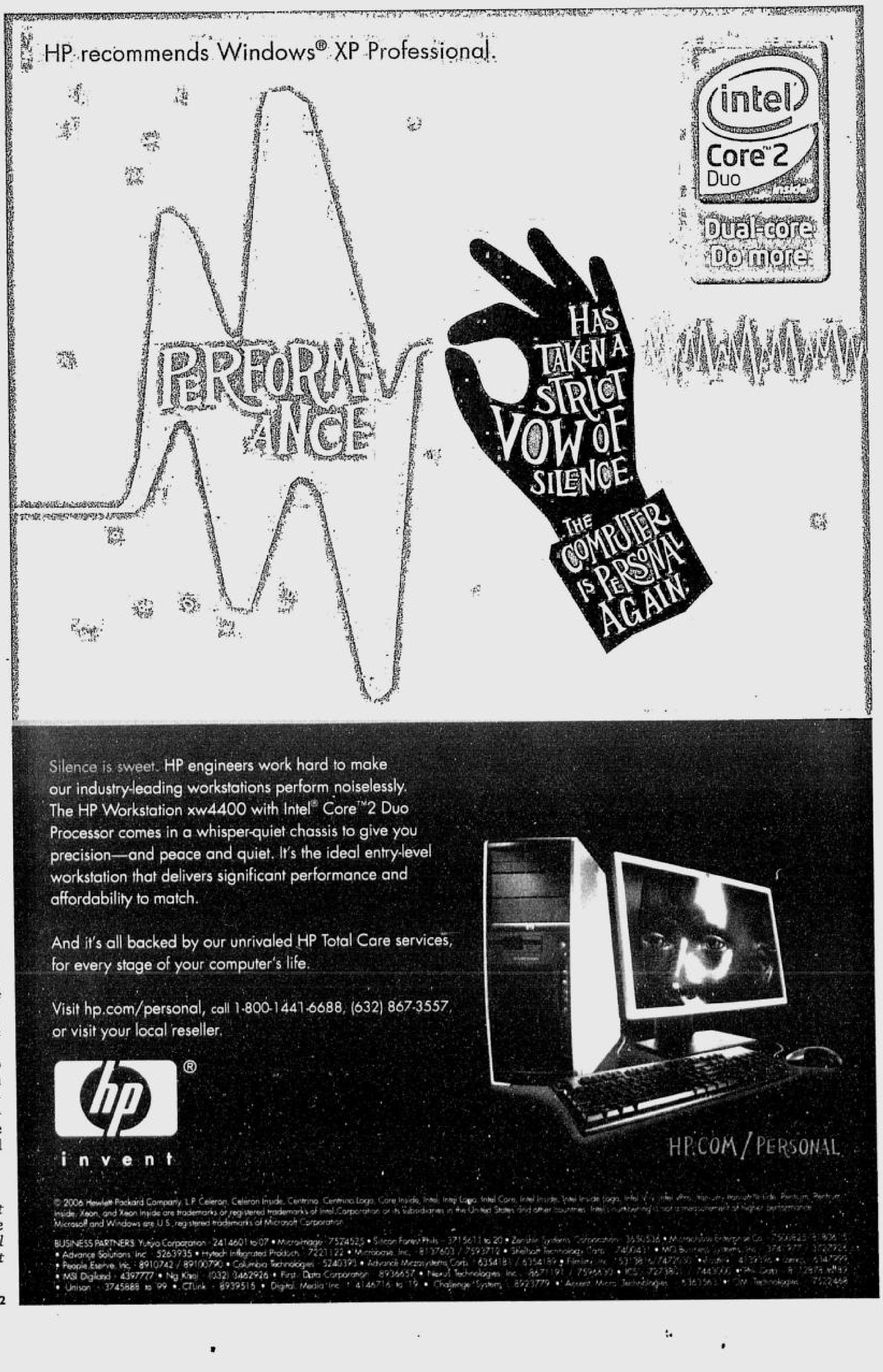
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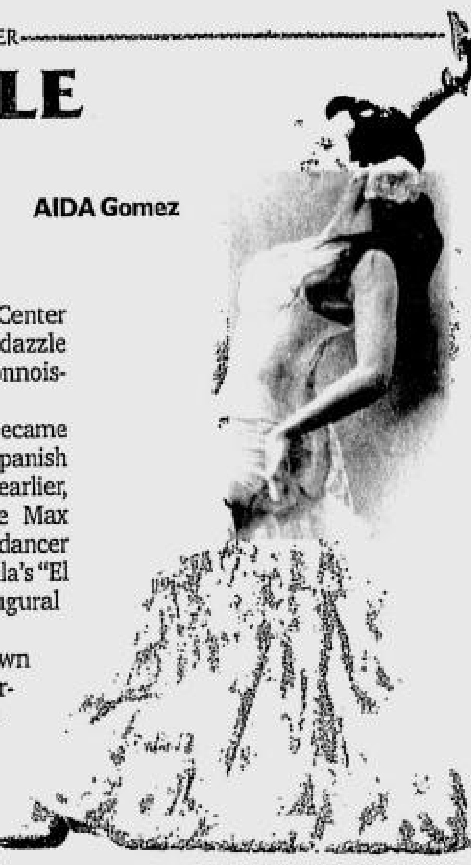


AIDA Gomez

INSTITUTO CERVANTES OFFERS once more a veritable feast for the senses when it holds the sixth edition of Fiesta!, the annual Spanish Festival for Culture and Arts, this October.

With Instituto Cervantes' new director, Dr. Jose "Pepe" Rodriguez at the helm, the month-long celebration showcases the latest and most awarded films from Spain and Latin America; avant-garde dances by internationally acclaimed dancer-choreographers; music by a renowned jazz trio; and culminates in the restaging of the opera "Carmen" by one of Spain's premier flamenco dance companies.

Sharing the limelight are Filipino dancers and theater artists performing works by Spanish masters, including Cervantes, who inspired the founding of Instituto Cervantes in 1991.

Since it opened in Manila in 1993, the first to be established in Asia, Instituto Cervantes has spearheaded efforts at strengthening historic ties between Spain and the Philippines by providing a venue for sustained dialogue through the study of the Spanish language as well as cultural and artistic activities which promote greater understanding of today's Spain and the rest of the Hispanic world.

Through Fiesta!, Instituto Cervantes celebrates Spain's National Day on Oct. 12 by bringing to Manila the best of Spain's artists in an encounter aimed at enriching the shared cultural heritage and reinforcing the bonds of solidarity between both countries.

Exquisite 'Carmen'

The Aida Gomez Flamenco Company's provocative restaging of Georges Bizet's "Carmen" on Oct. 17, 8 p.m., at the Main Theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, is expected to dazzle Manila's discriminating dance connoisseurs and enthusiasts.

The multi-awarded Gomez became the youngest artistic director of Spanish National Ballet in 1981. A year earlier, she had been honored with the Max Scenic Arts Prize for best female dancer as the lead in her production of Falla's "El Sombrero de Tres Picos," the inaugural show of Madrid's Teatro Real.

In 2001, Gomez founded her own company and staged its debut performance of "Salome," under the brilliant film director Carlos Saura. She was awarded the prestigious National Dance Award in 2004.

In "Carmen," Gomez combines flamenco and Spanish classical dance in a performance that always enthrals audiences.

Tickets at Ticketworld. Students of Instituto Cervantes are entitled to discounts. Call 5261482 to 85.

A SCENE from "Carmen"

Weekend of modern dance

Dancer-choreographers Jordi Cortes and Damian Muñoz performed the critically acclaimed "Óleles" on Oct. 7, at 7:30 pm at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium in RCBC Plaza, Makati.

Inspired by Sandor Marai's novel "Embers," "Oleles" received the Premio Ciudad de Barcelona for Best Performance in 2004 and the Premio de la Feria International de Huesca for Best Dance Piece in 2005.

Cortes is artistic director of Alta Realitat while Muñoz founded his own dance company in 1996 and has ventured into the production of video dance films.

Mediterranean jazz

The internationally renowned Ignasi Terra Trio take the stage with its own mix of jazz, swing and blues on Oct. 13, 7:30 p.m., at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium in RCBC Plaza.

Catalan pianist Ignasi Terraza, French double-bass player Pierre Boussaguet and Vietnamese drummer and trumpeter Jean-Pierre Derouard make up the trio which has performed in Bayona, Montreux and Paris music festivals.

Admission is free.

For more info about Fiesta! 2006, call Instituto Cervantes at 5261482 to 85, or log on to http://manila.cervantes.es.

See you at Pelicula!

From page C1

Women and shoes

By Shirley O. Lua

'Piedras' ('The Stones Speak'; Spain, 2002)

FIVE WOMEN. FIVE DIFFERENT WALKS. This is the story of "Piedras" (2002; English title: "Stones"), the first feature film of Spanish director Ramón Salazar.

The narrative structure is familiar: The focus shifts from one woman to another, recounting each story, building up to the turning points. Each woman is highlighted in an introductory scene, her name and a short description of the kind of shoes she wears are superimposed briefly on screen, hinting at the woman's personality and veiling her with a sense of mystery (e.g. Isabel, *la mujer de los zapatos pequeños*; or Isabel, the woman with the small shoes).

The five lives are intertwined through coincidences. This technique, incidentally, is the strength of this film, and, at the same time, its weakness. The coincidences produce moments of surprises (or shocks), as each woman's drama gradually unfolds to reveal private struggles and stones of stumbling.

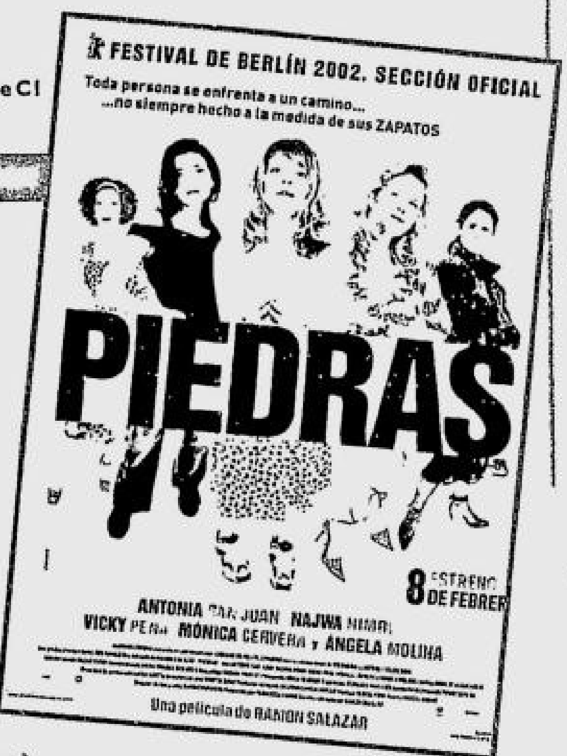
They also attempt to interlace and tie up the different threads of relationships, so that the audience may considerably follow the footsteps of the women throughout the whole film. However, coincidences, if handled with less subtlety and inventiveness, tend to call attention to themselves, thus rendering the dramatic scenes contrived.

The five women portrayed are unfortunate in love and life. They dream of a better future, of love and romance, of success and refuge, of flight and fresh air. At one point, the film likens this dream to a 30-year expedition in search of the right shoes to fit one's blistered feet. Dream remains unfulfilled; fading away on the dance floor, breaking off in the death of a goldfish, or winging out from childlike drawings.

Perhaps, the very un-Hollywood ending gives the film its defining moments: Each woman, in her own way, takes a bold step forward and seeks a lesser dream; whether it be driving off to Lisbon to realize a father's last wish, or sitting down to write a novel.

Ultimately, the film depicts the story of a city—restless, seeking, striving to cope with the banalities and complexities of life. It is the story of Madrid, perhaps in the form a TV talk show, where women confess of husbands cheating, or beating them up. It is the story of Madrid—boring, vicious, passionate, exhilarating, excruciating, lonely, hopeful.

The film boasts of understated yet moving performances by a fine cast, notably those of Antonia San Juan (as Adela), Najwa Nimri (Leire), Ángela Molina (Isabel) and Vicky Peña (Maricarmen). Finally, to offset its melodramatic overtones, the script sparkles with a charming blend of irony and humor (Isabel's "psychiatric" sessions with the podiatrist are hilarious).


FESTIVAL DE BERLÍN 2002. SECCIÓN OFICIAL
Toda persona se enfrenta a un camino...
...no siempre hecho a la medida de sus ZAPATOS
PIEDRAS
8 ESTRENO DE FEBRER
ANTONIA SAN JUAN NAJWA NIMRI
VICKY PEÑA MÓNICA CERVERA y ÁNGELA MOLINA
Una película de RAMÓN SALAZAR

"Piedras" was nominated for the Golden Bear in the 2002 Berlin International Film Festival. Ramón Salazar received a nomination for Best New Director in the 2003 Goya Awards, and won the award for the Best Directorial Debut in the 2002 Stockholm Film Festival.

"Piedras" will be screened on Oct. 13 at 4:30 p.m.

Shirley O. Lua teaches literature at DLSU, specializing in Philippine Literature, Diaspora Studies, and Film and/as Literature.

Napoleonic, audacious

By Alice M. Sun-Cua

'Elsa & Fred: From Madrid to Rome, Always with Love' (Argentina, 2005)

TAKE A FEISTY, HOT-BLOODED, SOMEtimes fuzzy-minded but impossibly beautiful lady who knows what she wants in life; and a prim, orderly, quiet, life-by-the-rules gentleman. Mix them together in a tumultuous encounter with a car incident, a fake sob story, and a small dog called Bonaparte. Throw in a domineering daughter, a beatnik artist son, and a huge dose of literal "La Dolce Vita." And you get "Elsa & Fred," an Argentinian offering.

Never mind if Elsa (China Zorilla) is a 70-ish Argentinean who blurs the line between truth and fiction, and he, Fred (Manuel Alexandre), is a 78-year-old proper Madrileño who recently lost his wife and had to move to a new domicile where he meets the indomitable Elsa.

The story moves fast, with the impetus given by Elsa who invariably thinks up of interesting things to do, especially her keen, and almost desperate but endearing attempts to engage the attention and affections of the widower who, if he were any gentleman, should have succumbed to her charms and wit at the very start.

The dialogue sparkles, many parts are downright hilarious, and one can't help but side with Elsa in her antics and put-on confabulations, and at the same time urging Fred to "Go on, hold her! Love her!"

Always at the background, like a *contrapunto* that adds to the poignancy of the story, is Fellini's movie, with the immortal scene of Anita Ekberg at the Fontana di Trevi, voluptuously getting wet one dark night, with Marcelo Mastroianni looking impossibly young... and looking like... well, Marcelo Mastroianni.

Above and beyond the capriciousness, the bantering and the froth is the dark truth that ties all the seemingly loose ends together in the denouement. Here Elsa proves to one and all that it is never too late to dream, to reach for the stars, even to love.

She announces in no uncertain terms that living life fully to the hilt is the only thing—in fact, after all that has been said and done, the only sane thing that should be done, amidst the inexplicably cruel realities of today, and the uncertainties of tomorrow. This movie enchants in its very premise:

"Dance! Laugh! Sing! What better time to do it, than now?" There might not be a chance for everyone to go audaciously into Madrid's finest restaurant, order steak and the best dessert for dinner and then give the maître d the slip, or get away with fibbing about almost anything in one's life.

But the movie nudges us into realizing that life is to be savored—wildly, fully, even if it means flying into the Fontana di Trevi, in one way or the other, sometimes if only in the mind, outdo Anita Ekberg in her own fountain scene, and perhaps, just perhaps, touch the stars, hold our dreams tight, and never let go.

"Elsa & Fred: From Madrid to Rome, Always With Love" will be shown Oct. 12 at 4:30 p.m.

Alice M. Sun-Cua, a poet and physician, has been studying Spanish at the Instituto Cervantes since 2000. She practices obstetrics and gynecology at San Juan de Dios Hospital and has an MFA in Creative Writing from DLSU.

Unreal reality TV

By Sid Gomez Hildawa

'El Metodo'
('El Metodo Gronholm'; Spain, 2005)

HAVING BEEN SATURATED BY LOCAL television with reality shows where participants are voted out to determine the final winner, Philippine viewers will find it easy to be drawn into the Marcelo Pineyro film "El Metodo."

My initial apprehension at the prospect of sitting through another variation of "Survivor" or "The Practice" easily fizzled out as I realized that "El Metodo" presented a much more sophisticated take on the nature of cutthroat competition.

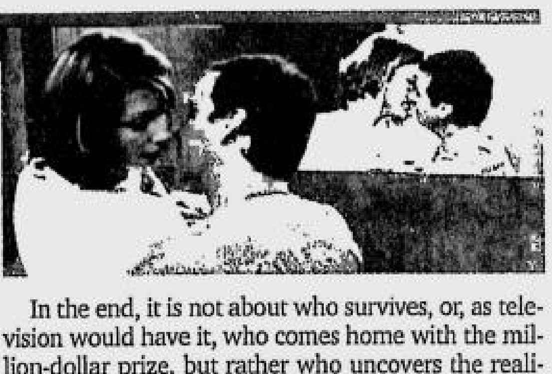
In this film, short-listed applicants to a job find themselves enclosed in a room to undergo the final selection process where each of them will have to justify why they should be chosen for that single high-level position at a multinational corporation.

Because the film is based on a play (by Jordi Galceran), the script manifests some characteristics carried over from stage production: few changes in setting; less action in favor of dialogue; and much less spectacle than one would find in an engrossing movie.

Which is not to say that the film is boring. On the contrary, the director has used these limitations to make the film intellectually engaging, focusing on the essence of survival: the nature of reality itself.

With the crucial twists and turns unfolding through dialogue, the film argues that reality is a construction of language; that truth can take many guises and become a means of painful betrayal.

A romantic angle further heightens the tension as the possibility of love between two remaining contenders becomes the sacrificial lamb on the altar of reality.



In the end, it is not about who survives, or, as television would have it, who comes home with the million-dollar prize, but rather who uncovers the realities underneath those that "reality" games claim to portray. In this film, the critical audience emerges as winner.

"El Metodo" will be shown Oct. 14 at 7 p.m.

Sid Gomez Hildawa is a poet, visual artist, and architect. He manages the Cultural Center of the Philippines' (CCP) Department of Visual, Literary and Media Arts.

Fitting homecoming for Pepe Rodriguez

FILIPINOS WILL BE GLAD TO know that the new director of Spain's Instituto Cervantes may very well be one of their very own: veteran Manila-based Spanish journalist José "Pepe" Rodriguez.

If those who admire Spain or other Spanish-speaking countries are called "*amigos de España*," Don Pepe, as his many friends call the good *hombre*, may be described as an "*amigo de Filipinas*."

Born in San Juan de Rio, in the northwestern Galician city of Ourense, Rodriguez first came to Manila in 1977 as a freelance correspondent, settling down in marriage a year later with Lulu Coching, daughter of the brilliant illustrator and storyteller Francisco Coching. The union has been blessed with two children, both of whom are pursuing postgraduate degrees in Spain.

Embracing journalism, Rodriguez joined Agencia EFE of Spain, the fourth largest wire service in the world, and began reporting on the country and its people in the late '70s. He soon became chief of EFE's operations in Southeast Asia and the Pacific and was instrumental in setting up EFE's English World Service in Manila.

His peers in the profession have recognized him as one of the best in their ranks by his election as president of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines (Focap) and the Manila Overseas Press Club (MOPC). He is also a member of the International Press Institute, the Asean Journalists Association, the Association of European Journalists, the Press Association of Madrid, and the National Press Club of the Philippines.

Rodriguez's reportage of 25 years has since been turned into a slim volume, "Cronicas," a book or recollection on events and people he has covered and encountered in his forays throughout the archipelago.

Before he was recalled to Spain by Agencia EFE, he collaborated with his wife, one of the country's best portraitists, to publish "Philippine First Ladies: Portraits," an intimate glimpse into the lives of the women who stood by their husbands in the midst of revolution, war, tragedy, political and economic challenges since the founding of Asia's First Republic.

Loyal son of Spain

For being an outstanding citizen and loyal son of Spain, Rodriguez was awarded by His Majesty King Juan Carlos 1 of Spain the Encomienda de Isabel la Catolica while his home region of Galicia recognized him as one of its distinguished sons by according him the Medal of Galicia.

Rodriguez's advocacy as president of Academia Filipina de la Lengua Española, the Philippine branch of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, is also credited for maintaining Filipino interest in the Spanish and Galician languages.

He also founded the Centro Gallego de Filipinas—the first association of Galicians in Asia—to promote relations between the regional autonomous government of Galicia and the Philippines. He was responsible for bringing to Intramuros the storied Cruceiro de Galicia, the famous wayside stone cross, which was a donation to the city of Manila.

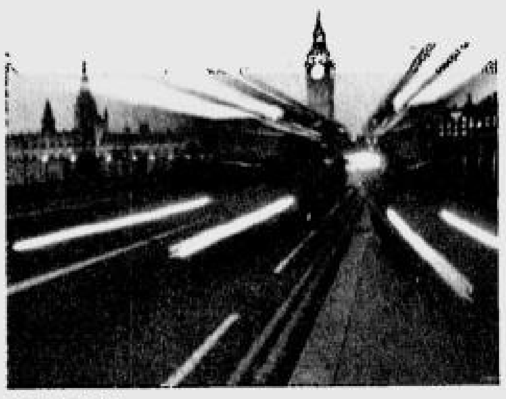
True friend of Filipinos

The Philippine government awarded Rodriguez the Order of Sikatuna for his contributions to the strengthening of relations between the Philippines and Spain. He was also conferred Doctor of Humanities, honoris causa, by the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila. He was a consultant to the chair, then Vice President Salvador P. Laurel, of the National Centennial Commission.

After an absence of four years, Rodriguez has returned to the Philippines at the helm of Instituto Cervantes. This may very well augur exciting developments in its efforts to promote the language of Don Miguel de Cervantes among Filipinos, and heighten encounters between Filipino and Spanish artists and cultural workers.

'Tracing the Wind'

Foto journey of a father-and-son

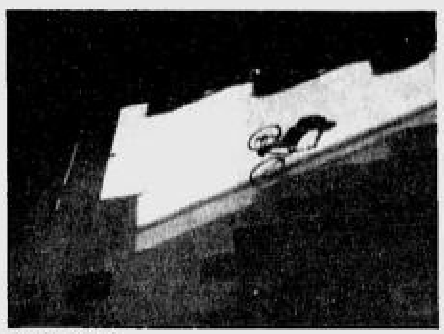

LONDON

TOKYO

LEE and Jun de Leon

DUBAI

LONDON


LONDON

SONY ERICSSON AND DISTINGUISHED lensman Jun de Leon, with his photographer-son Lee, have collaborated in "Tracing the Wind," a photography book that presents a journey, an adventure and a story—the collected impressions of foreign and local places told not through words but through a myriad of riveting, vivid photographs.

The photographs were shot by means of Sony Ericsson's sensational Cybershot phone, the K800i.

Jun and Lee had discussed the possibility of producing an entire book of camera phone-captured pictures. They went to work shooting photos, doing a layout and presenting the proofs to Sony Ericsson, which gave the go-signal.

Among his kids, Jun says Lee is most similar to him in terms of personality. "He has all my good qualities and also my bad ones. Lee's very honest in all his dealings, he fights for what he believes in, he's also stubborn like me. We always want to do things the right way, the best over the easy. We were really excited to do the journey together."

For the project, the two embarked on a trip that spanned several countries and involved a lot of fun.

It was "a journey with no destination and no exit." It was "unbounded by time." And it sounded daunting to compulsive planners who follow strict itineraries during jaunts abroad. But Jun and Lee are experts on this manner of travel. It is actually a family tradition; they've never considered the benefit of carrying maps.

It is in this seemingly nomadic way that they have stumbled upon wonderful things, memorable situations and, in the case of Jun and Lee who both drink cupfuls of coffee, a string of cafés that offers good brew.

They came back bearing not only eye-catching photographs of London, Dubai, Los Angeles, Japan and the Philippines, but also their personal perspectives on the places they visited and the things they experienced.

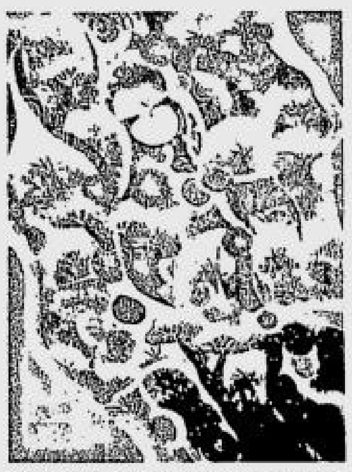
"Tracing the Wind" is a coup for Jun, Lee and Sony Ericsson. "We've proven that you can use this camera phone [K800i] for many purposes, even for a whole book," says Lee.

He was impressed with its 3.2 megapixels plus the incorporation of the Cybershot technology. "The pictures are sharp; you don't need to adjust them."

The ultimate compliment for the K800i, though, is the book itself. Says Jun: "We didn't have expectations in the beginning. It was a challenge, it has never been done before. The camera phone performed well, you can see that from the results."

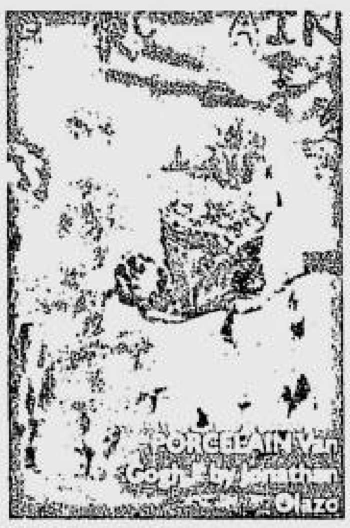
Selected photos from "Tracing the Wind" will be on exhibit Oct. 12-22 at 2/F Main Mall, SM Mall of Asia.

VISUAL ARTS


"TRUE Love," by Eman Santos

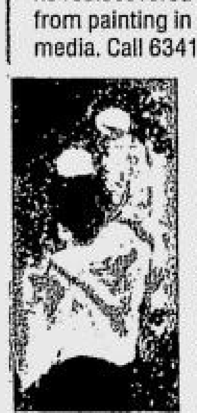
Santos at De las Islas

"True Love," acrylic on canvas by Eman Santos, will be on view at Galeria de las Islas, Silahis Center, Intramuros, Oct. 14. The exhibit "Trees Age Matter" features over 35 paintings in acrylic. Call 5272113 for details.



J. Olazo at West

Jonathan Olazo presents "The Last Mojo Show" until Oct. 21 at West Gallery, 48 West Ave., QC. Through the exhibit, Olazo says he rediscovered the joys derived from painting in oil and mixed media. Call 6341284.

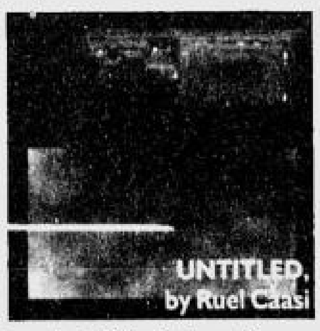

"PANDANGGO sa Ilaw," by Bettina Silverio

Silverio at Le Soufflé

Bettina Maria Silverio's first solo exhibit, "As I Saw Her," captures Asian women—Indian, Japanese, Tibetan, Filipino—at work and at play. It opens today and runs until Nov. 4 at Le Soufflé, Top of the Citi, 34/F, Citibank Tower, Paseo de Roxas, Makati.

Various artists in 'Alab'

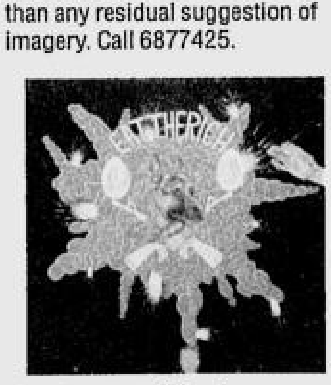
Ronald Ventura, Olan Ventura, Joel Mendez, Ferdie Montemayor, Ruel Caasi, Ej Cabangon, Manok Ventura, Rodel Tapaya, Jevijoe Vitug, Pedro Garcia, Salvador Ching, Wesley Valenzuela, Mikel Parial, Lynyrd Paras, Froilan Calayag, Ryan Jara, Ryan Rubio, Jason Montinola, Demosthenes Campos, Neil Javier, Roen Capule, Joven Mansit, John Paul Antido, Marina Cruz, and Igan D'Bayan are featured in The Big & Small Art Co.'s "Alab" exhibit, until Oct. 22 at Art Center, 4/F, SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City. The exhibit, says curator Ronald Ventura, deals with creative fire: "The works focus on the ardor, the passion of artistic expression, and how each artist defines that spark." Call 3742437 or 6877425, or e-mail bignsmallart@yahoo.com.


UNTITLED, by Ruel Caasi

Caasi at Big & Small

Ruel Caasi presents "New Works," until Oct. 16 at the Big & Small Art Co., 4/L Megamall Bldg. A, Mandaluyong City.

In his latest works, using light industrial materials has added physical presence far stronger than any residual suggestion of imagery. Call 6877425.



Cordero at Finale

Opening Oct. 12 at the Finale Art Gallery is Louie Cordero's "Synthetic Fury." An exhilarating juxtaposition of propaganda symbols, Pop Art images, and disturbing personal metaphors, the exhibit examines, at once violent and volatile, the interstices of sociopolitical realities. Marked with coruscating wit and fiery humor, the artist's imagination overrides traditional boundaries of meaning-making to create a manifesto of his engaged declarations. Exhibit runs until Oct. 31. Finale Art Gallery is at 4/F SM Megamall A, Mandaluyong City. Call 6342411.

UGNAYAN '80, a group of UST Fine Arts alumni, presents its annual exhibit until Oct. 31 at Le Soufflé, G/L Amorsolo Square, Amorsolo Drive, Rockwell Center, Makati. In photo: (seated from left) Editha Mata-Guerrero, Koni Samson-Sayo, Lourdes Riu-Andrews, Pagasa "Boy" Estrella; (standing) Antonio Austria, Mario Santiago, Domingo Alconaba, Renato Quiroz, Pablo Javier and Ruben Sindac

2006 MICLAT ART AWARDEES FETED

The show must go on

By Alma Cruz Miclat
Contributor

NORMA Liongoren, Jullie Lluch, Meynard Halili, Melvin Arlegui, May Datuin, Adi Baens Santos, Edna Manlapaz, Ding Ramos and Herman Gamboa

WHEN CHINA-BORN MANINGNING MICLAT passed away Sept. 29, 2000, she left behind a trilingual book of poetry titled "Voice from the Underworld," essays, stories and valuable artworks which include "Soliloquy," an 8' x 44' mural in the Chinese tradition of *xieyi* painting, and "Trouble in Paradise," an abstract painting which won grand prize in the 1992 Art Association of the Philippines competition.

Vowing to carry on the legacy of this "poet who painted with words and painter who brought images to light," the Maningning Miclat Art Foundation Inc. (MMAFI) started the Maningning Miclat Award (MMA) in 2003.

That year and in 2005, winners in poetry in English, Filipino and Chinese were recognized and awarded. In 2004, MMA for painting was held and henceforth is being held during even-numbered years.

This year's MMA gathered a rich harvest of artworks from over 100 artists, aged 9-28. Continuing the legacy of excellence set forth by the prodigious Maningning, 42 entries were shortlisted and are now on exhibit at the Liongoren Gallery in Cubao. Six emerged as finalists including a 12-year-old artist from International School of Manila, José Antonio Turalba.

Even as the whole of New York, Cubao, was reeling with brownout a day after typhoon "Milenyo" wrought havoc, "The Show Must Go on," as the title of the grand-prize winning piece states. So on Sept. 29, Norma Liongoren, Liongoren Gallery's owner and curator, welcomed the guests in the candlelit gallery.

MMAFI chair Meynard Halili gave an invocation while president Herman Gamboa talked about the foundation's activities. Awards were given out by them together with MMAFI board members Edna Manlapaz, Ding Ramos, James Na and Linda Halili as well as the judges of the contest—noted sculptor Jullie Lluch, veteran social realist Pablo Baens Santos and UP Fine Arts professor and art critic May Datuin.

Other judges of this contest were multi-awarded painter and sculptor Gus Albor, and academic, businessman and art patron Cesar T. Duque.

MARIO and Alma Miclat with Melvin Arlegui

Brunei-born Melvin Arlegui, a fifth-year Fine Arts student from Far Eastern University, was declared winner of the grand prize. He went home with P28,000, an Orlina glass sculpture trophy, a MMAFI plate by Lanelle Abueva and a copy of the Miclats' book, "Beyond the Great Wall."

FEU turned out to be the winningest school when its cum laude, Fine Arts graduate and presently art director of CreativBiz Mervin Vergara, won first honorable mention. Another BFA student from FEU, Charlie Villagracia, won second honorable mention.

People's Choice Award, voted during the Sept. 25-27 exhibit of shortlisted entries, went to 13-year-old Reynaldo P. Jaylo III of University of Santo Tomas.

Polytechnic University of the Philippines BS Architecture student Ronald Jeresano and Eulogio Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology Fine Arts student Jesus Tejada were among the finalists.

It was a night of music and poetry at Liongoren Gallery as Aba Dalena sang "Dumaan Ako," Maningning's poem set into music by Joey Ayala. One of the 2005 winners of the Maningning Miclat Award for Poetry, Sonny Sendon, together with *prinsipe ng balagtasan* Mike Coroza and noted Tsinoy poet James Na, read poems.

Maningning's sister, Banaue, took time off from her rehearsal of Met's "Faust" in New York to "congratulate all the artists, both those who won and those who continue working toward the betterment of their craft. Don't ever tire of learning and always face creativity head on." Mario I. Miclat emceed the program.

Doing impromptu readings and performances were veteran poet Teo Antonio, haiku guru Rogelio Mangahas, Unyon ng Mga Manunulat sa Pilipinas chair Roberto Añonuevo, and the recent pride of Pinoys for winning UK's Bridport Prize 2006 competition, Joel Toledo, as well as Shakespeare lover Meynard Halili, and San Beda Law student and MMAFI volunteer Pambie Herrera.

E-mail the author at acmiclat2004@yahoo.com. Log on to www.maningning.com

World-renowned designer to give design symposium Oct. 12

"MANILA NOW," THE PHILIPPINE International Furniture Show 2007 organized by the Chamber Furniture Industry of the Philippines (CFIP), has invited its featured international designer, Gaetano Pesce, to conduct a design symposium as part of its outreach program to the design, furniture and furnishings industries.

It will also serve as a preview to Manila Now, a boutique design show that helps create a niche for Philippine design in the global market. It will be held at the World Trade Center and the Philippine Trade and Training Center in Manila Feb. 27-March 2, 2007.

Pesce's talk at the symposium will be titled "Manuality and Industrial Production." The design symposium will be held Oct. 12, 3 p.m., at the PICC Plenary Hall. It will be attended by executives and designers of CFIP member companies, furniture and furnishings manufacturers, architects, designers, interior designers, professors and students from different universities.

Pesce, an Italian architect-designer based in New York City, has undertaken diverse commissions in architecture, urban planning, interior and exhibition design, industrial design, and publishing.

In over 40 years of practice, Pesce has conceived public and private projects in the United States, Europe, Latin America and Asia, ranging from residences to gardens and corporate offices.

Pesce's extensive body of work—recognized for its emotive and tactile qualities, unrestrained use of color, and insistence upon innovative building materials developed through new technologies—has been described by the prominent architecture critic Herbert Muschamp as "the architectural equivalent of a brainstorm."

Born in La Spezia, Italy, in 1939, Pesce was trained at the University of Venice Faculty of Architecture. He has lived in Padova, Venice, London, Helsinki, Paris and, since 1980, New York.

GAETANO Pesce

Pesce has served as visiting lecturer and professor at many prestigious institutions in America and abroad, including the Cooper Union School of Architecture in New York. For 28 years, he was a faculty member at the Institut d'Architecture et d'Etudes Urbaines in Strasbourg, France. Pesce has also worked in the US, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Japan and Brazil.

On the subjects of his work, he says: "For the past 40 years, I have been trying to give architecture back its capacity to be 'useful,' by quoting recognizable, figurative images commonly associated with street life and popular culture, and by generating new typologies. I strive to seek new materials that fit into the logic of construction, while performing services appropriate to real need. Architecture of the recent past has mostly produced cold, anonymous, monolithic, antiseptic, standardized and abstract results that are uninspiring. I have tried to communicate feelings of surprise, discovery, optimism, stimulation, sensuality, generosity, joy and femininity."

For more details, call 6329007 or fax 6312977, e-mail manilanow@cfip.org.ph or log on to www.manilanow.ph.

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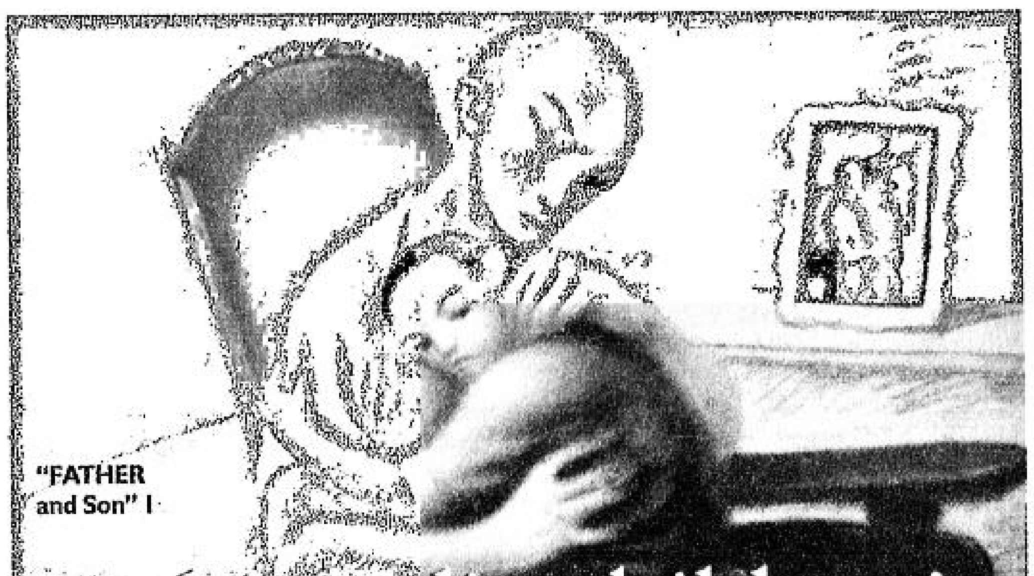


"FATHER and Son" I

Multimedia children's book to be launched

THE CANVAS ART GROUP WILL RELEASE its latest children's book, "The Rocking Horse," a collaboration between artist Elmer Borlongan and writer Becky Bravo.

Borlongan's painting, "The Rocking Horse," was the basis of a children's storywriting contest that received over 80 entries from Filipinos all over the world. The contest, which has since renamed the Romeo Forbes Children's Storywriting Competition in honor of the late 24-year-old artist Forbes who died last February of cancer, was won by Bravo. Borlongan did a suite of paintings for the book which were sold out last June.

The book, co-published by Canvas and the UST Publishing House, will be launched on Oct. 13, at 6 p.m. at 1of Gallery, 2/L, Shops at Serendra, Taguig, Metro Manila.

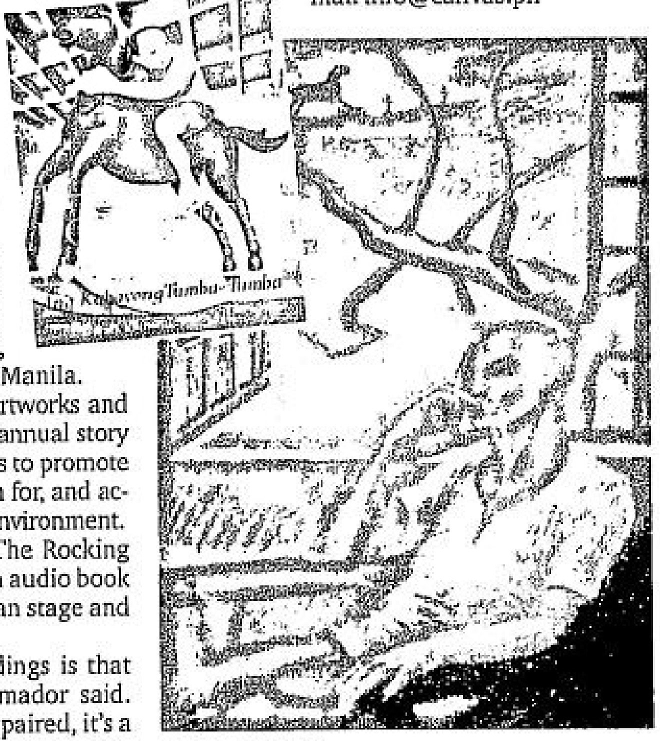
Proceeds from the sale of the artworks and books will be used to support the annual story contest and other Canvas initiatives to promote broader awareness of, appreciation for, and access to Philippine art, culture and environment.

A limited-edition version of "The Rocking Horse" will be accompanied by an audio book CD of the story, narrated by veteran stage and TV actress Pinky Amador.

"One good thing about recordings is that they bring the piece to life," Amador said. "And of course, for the visually impaired, it's a treat to have an alternative to Braille. In this day and age, parents and educators need all the help they can get to get the message and learning across."

"The Rocking Horse" will be sold at all major bookstores but the limited-edition versions will be available only through Canvas, UST Publishing House and select art gallery partners.

Visit www.canvas.ph or e-mail info@canvas.ph



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A true picture of Wellness

- The benefits of drinking coffee
- 10 Signs of Good Nutrition
- Milo helps children aim high in sports
- Understanding food science at the Nestlé Research Center

Choose Wellness®
Choose Nestlé

Go for a healthy lifestyle

Anyone can be an expert on wellness with the right information and better choices. Keeping fit and eating right go hand in hand. Knowing what you're eating is another thing. There really is no such thing as bad food though, only bad diets. Still, nothing can beat having an active and healthy lifestyle. Active does not only mean just going to the gym or taking on a rigorous sport. Simple exercises at home or in the office, if done regularly, can make a significant impact on the body. A 20- to 30-minute moderate physical activity, like walking or doing household chores at least three times a week is good enough.

More information, more choices

Wellness means different things to different people. Some consider being healthy as not having any life-threatening disease, while for others it is having a lean body and for some it is having stronger stamina.

Knowing the facts instead of relying on myths will help you understand what being healthy really means. It would be easier to choose what food to eat once you've learned its benefits.

Clinical observations show that people with risk factors like smoking, diabetes, and hypertension, are getting younger. The Philippine Journal of Internal Medicine states that 90 percent of total Filipinos (from 4,500 samples) with at least one risk factor, are aged 20 and above. According to the 6th National Nutrition Survey (2003): Clinical Phase prepared by the Food and Nutrition Research Institute, most chronic diseases that affect Filipino adults are nutrition-related. This said, people should become more aware of their total wellness even at a young age, and such awareness should start from knowing what is and what is not good for the body.

Cholesterol

Cardiovascular disease is often associated with high cholesterol levels in the blood, giving the wrong impression that all cholesterol is bad for the body. Cholesterol is a substance found among the fats (lipids) in the bloodstream and in all cells of the body. Everybody has cholesterol because it is used for tissue formation, metabolism, and hormone production.

Cholesterol only becomes bad for the health when a person gets too much of it. Cholesterol can't dissolve in the blood. So, once the total level of cholesterol in the blood gets abnormally high, it could lead to a condition called hypercholesterolemia, where the body becomes predisposed to coronary heart disease. This could lead to a clog in an artery and eventually a heart attack.

The good news, however, is one can keep cholesterol levels in check. For this, there are several measures one can take into consideration. Keeping to a healthy diet by avoiding cholesterol-rich foods, combined with regular exercise, is an example.

And as part of a healthy lifestyle, one can consider including "heart-friendly" products to one's grocery shopping list--products like NESVITA Pro-Heart. Developed expertly by Nestlé Science, NESVITA Pro-Heart is the only one with Acticol--natural plant sterols clinically proven to help lower cholesterol by 7 percent in 30 days. Imagine enjoying delicious low-fat milk that helps manage your cholesterol. Now that's a real treat!

Look even better on the inside.

Have you ever stopped and realized just how much effort we all put into looking gorgeous? Looking gorgeous on the outside could be a lot easier if we all paid a little more attention to making our "insides" gorgeous as well. And this, oddly enough, is where good bacteria comes in. Do you know those tiny little microorganisms inside you can do you a world of good on the outside?

Exactly what do these little guys do?

Right now, you have more bacteria inside your body than the total number of people who have ever lived on Earth. In fact, you have 20 times more bacteria than there are cells in your entire body. Most people would be fairly appalled at the thought, but in truth, your health would be in quite a bit of trouble without these "good bacteria".

Good bacteria support your immune system by fighting disease-causing bacteria such as E. Coli and salmonella. When these harmful bacteria invade us, they take up residence on the lining of our intestinal tract, multiplying and taking over more and more intestinal area. Good bacteria fight these harmful bacteria by adhering to the intestinal wall, thus preventing bad bacteria from occupying the intestinal tract. They serve as protection against bad bacteria. These friendly bacteria are crucial to digesting food and absorbing vitamins and nutrients. A healthy digestive system should have a lot of friendly bacteria. Our lower intestine can stay healthy with up to 15% unfriendly bacteria, as long as the body contains at least 85% good bacteria. Unfortunately, with most people, this percentage is reversed.

Why do they need our help?

Good bacteria are actually fairly fragile; poor eating habits as well as certain illnesses can destroy good bacteria and allow bad bacteria to multiply. This leads to symptoms that may seem fairly minor: bloating, excessive gas, indigestion, bad breath, and so on. However, if not addressed, this probiotic deficiency can lead to more serious conditions, such as constipation, diarrhea, intestinal toxicity, fungal and yeast infections, and poor overall nutrient absorption.

There's a delicious solution, ladies.

Healthy and delicious NESTLÉ YOGURT, plain and simple.

It's a convenient and yummy way to keep your digestive system healthy. It has live microorganisms, the good bacteria that help your body fight off bad bacteria.

Yogurt is also a good source of calcium, which is good for your bones. It helps prevent osteoporosis. Calcium has even been discovered to help the body reduce fat absorption.

There's something about Yogurt...

Just a word of caution, girls. Not all yogurts are created equal. There are yogurts out there that are marked UHT (Ultra-Heat-Treated). This heat treatment *kills* the good bacteria in the yogurt. And what good is good bacteria if it's dead? That's why it's very, very important to always look for the Live Microorganisms seal to ensure that you're getting the full benefits of yogurt. (Here's a tip: if you can find the yogurt product on unrefrigerated shelves, chances are the good bacteria's dead, meaning it can't do anything for your health)

So choose the Nestlé YOGURT that's perfect for you - NESTLÉ FRUIT SELECTION YOGURT, it has real fruit pieces and creamy yogurt; NESTLÉ 0% FAT YOGURT, a low-calorie snack and NIDO YOGURT which is good for kids.

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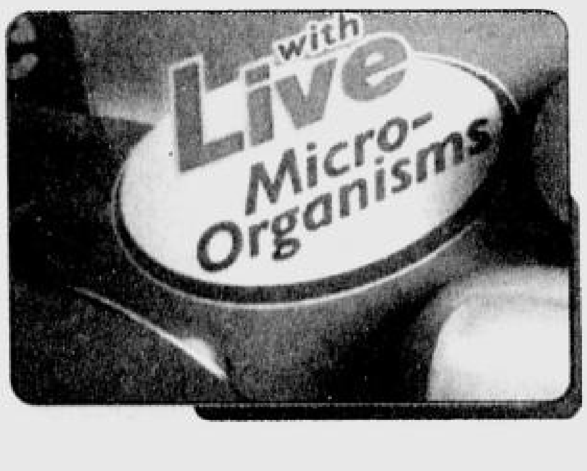


10 signs of good nutrition

We all know how important milk is. Milk has become the standard when it comes to nutritious healthy drinks. But we also found out that not all milks are the same. Thanks to the Wellness NIDO TV commercial, we've learned that "more protein more milk" and that "less carbohydrates = less sugar". What exactly do these mean?

More protein as an indicator of more milk is based on comparison with other milk products for children. It is important to read and compare labels when buying milk. The milk brand with more protein content than other brands is the milk brand that is able to give more of the goodness of milk in every glass.

The milk brand with less carbohydrates as compared to other brands, is also the better choice for children. This way, you are assured that your child will not get unnecessary and excessive sugar, instead of the milk proteins that he needs. Developing his taste for excessive sweetness can also pose health complications for him later in life.

It is important to give our children the milk they need regularly but it is equally important to make sure they get the right kind of milk.

How do we know our children are getting the right nutrients? The Nutritionists-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines has developed the 10 Signs of Good Nutrition. These 10 signs will allow mothers to immediately know if their children are properly nourished. Here are the 10 signs.

RIGHT WEIGHT FOR HEIGHT
Healthy kids have appropriate height and weight for their ages. To ensure their proper growth and development, nutrients like Protein, Calcium and Iron are needed.

2. GOOD MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT
Kids are full of energy and they need those muscles to keep up with their activities. For firm muscles, provide them with foods that are rich in Vitamin D, which is essential in bone formation and calcium absorption.

3. GOOD POSTURE
It may seem like a long shot but posture also plays a role in healthy development. Not only will it ensure proper transfer of energy, it will also relieve stress and fatigue. A diet rich in Calcium and Vitamins D and E will also help strengthen their bones.

4. CLEAR SKIN
Being in the "pink of health" means having clear rosy skin. This can be achieved by serving them afternoon snacks that are sources of Vitamin C and Zinc.

5. SHINY HAIR
Having silky smooth hair is one of the best indicators of health. To have healthy hair and scalp, one needs antioxidants like Vitamins A, C and E.

6. CLEAR EYES
Vision problems often begin at an early age as the eyes are developing. To help kids achieve good eyesight, foods that are rich in Vitamin A, Zinc and Iron should be incorporated in their diets.

7. ALERT AND CHEERFUL
One of the things that parents should watch out for is alertness and a good disposition. This can be achieved by materials that will stimulate the mind and the senses. A loving and trusting home environment will also ensure a cheerful and optimistic outlook in life.

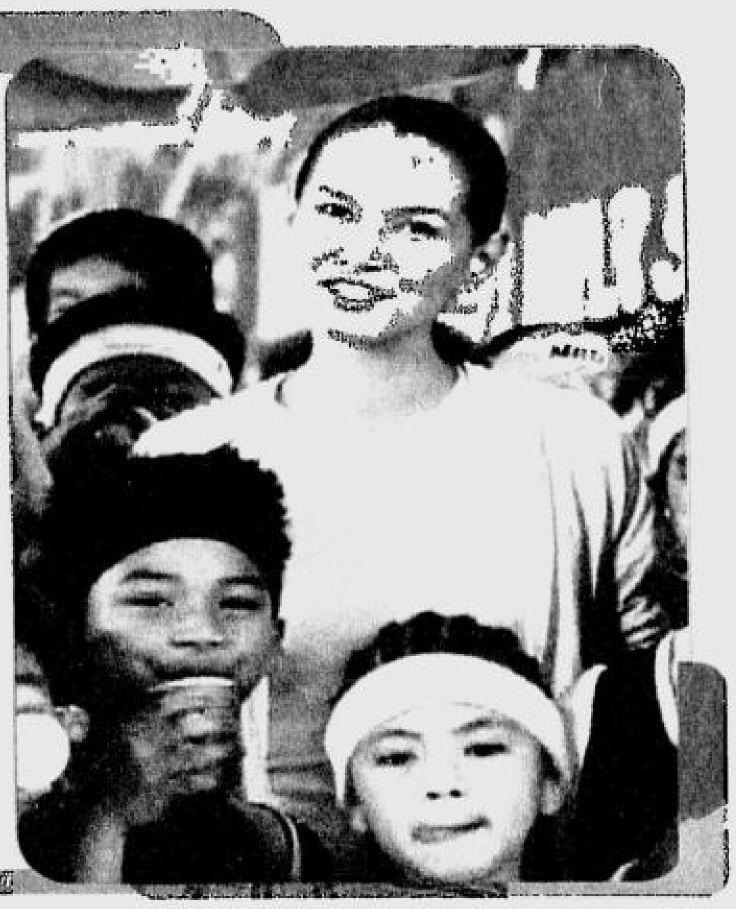
8 SLEEPS UNINTERRUPTEDLY
Sleep is essential in restoring depleted energy and recover from an active lifestyle. To help promote sleep, foods that are rich in B-vitamins should be part of the diet and of course a glass of NIDO FORTIFIED FULL CREAM milk before bedtime.

9 REGULAR BOWEL MOVEMENT
Proper digestion will ensure that nutrients will be absorbed by the body. Fibers aid in digestion and you can find them in abundance in fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grain cereals and breads.

10. GOOD APPETITE
When they are eating with gusto, be happy as having a great appetite is one of the signs of healthy growth. Of course, putting foods that are rich in Vitamin B and Magnesium will also help promote appetite.

Milo helps children AIM HIGH in sports

For 40 years now, MILO has been nurturing and supporting young athletes to become future champions. MILO has encouraged a lot of children to participate in different sports through its long-term involvement with sports development.



The MILO SUMMER Sports Clinics, which started in 1983, has 15 sports programs under its wings – badminton, basketball, bowling, chess, football, gymnastics, ice skating, lawn tennis, muay thai, squash, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo, volleyball, and wall climbing.

The clinics have become a byword in kids' summer activities. It is a nationwide program that teaches children the basics of different sports in a unique and scientific way.

The MILO BEST Center is a training center for basketball and volleyball athletes. It is Asia's first scientific school of basketball. Founded in 1979, it has produced graduates who became members of the national team, school basketball teams and professional basketball leagues such as PBA, MBA and PBL.

Among the impressive champions the MILO Summer Sports Clinics have produced through the years are Paola Obañana in badminton; Paolo Mendoza, Patrick Fran and Larry Fonacier in basketball; Olympian Bea Lucero; and SEA Games gold medalists Tammy de Guzman and Roel Ramirez in gymnastics; Mark Paragua in chess; Johnny Arcilla in tennis; and Japoy Lizardo in taekwondo.

MILO Marathon and the MILO Little Olympics, on the other hand, encourage kids to get into the MILO "Way of Life."

"Great things start from small beginnings" is the philosophy of MILO. MILO believes in nurturing future champions starting from childhood.

New improved MILO is made even more delicious and more nutritious with the healthy benefits of malt and Actigen-E – a group of B Vitamins plus Vitamin C, iron, calcium and magnesium which helps in the optimum release of energy.

With the health-giving goodness of MILO and its steadfast commitment to its various sports programs, great things will certainly continue to start from small beginnings.

FIGHT free radicals with a cup of coffee!

Who would have thought that an everyday simple pleasure could be so good for the body? Recent scientific studies have shown that coffee beans contain polyphenols, an antioxidant which helps protect the body against the attack of cell-destroying free radicals.

What are free radicals?

A free radical is an unstable oxygen molecule. Pollution and our own body processes produce free radicals. To become stable, free radicals "steal" an electron from body cells and this results in cell damage (the process is called oxidation). What counters free radicals are antioxidants – these are tiny molecules that help neutralize the body's free radicals.

Coffee and Antioxidants

Did you know that coffee is a rich source of antioxidants? Recent research conducted by the University of Scranton, USA revealed that coffee is in fact the number one source of antioxidants in the American diet, with both caffeinated and decaf versions shown to contain the same amount of antioxidant levels.

Antioxidants are dietary substances naturally found in foods. They prevent or repair cell damage, thus helping your body stay healthy. They counteract the action of free radicals by converting them into harmless waste products that get eliminated from the body before they can do damage. Thus, they help delay the onset of ageing and age-related diseases. The more oxidants we take in from foods and beverages mean more protection.

And now, NESCAFÉ introduces a breakthrough coffee product, new **NESCAFÉ PROTECT**. Manufactured using a proprietary process, NESCAFÉ PROTECT contains 3X more antioxidants than green tea and offers a smooth, mild and balanced taste. NESCAFÉ PROTECT provides consumers with a quick way to get the antioxidant protection they need while enjoying the excellent taste of a premium cup of coffee.

So have a cup of NESCAFÉ and have your dose of antioxidants today.

For more information, visit www.nescafe.com

Understanding food science

at the Nestlé Research Center

The NESTLÉ RESEARCH CENTER (NRC) found in Lausanne, Switzerland, lies at the heart of Nestlé's unique international Research and Development network of 18 centers on four continents. Composed of thousands of scientists, doctors, pediatricians, nutritionists and other specialists, the NRC is tasked to trailblaze research on food, health and nutrition for children and adults alike, and men and women of whatever nationality. The Center's activities fall broadly in the domains of life sciences, plant and food quality and safety.

Within Nestlé, the role of the NRC is to generate knowledge leading to innovative scientific breakthroughs that engender original and proprietary technologies that form the base for product and process innovation and renovation. It uses knowledge and learnings from all over the world to develop proprietary products and ingredients that help promote health and nutrition, and in a number of instances, even addresses specific illnesses.

A recent example of scientifically developed product that was launched in the Philippines is new NIDO 1+ and 3+ with Lactobacillus Protectus that will help both your child's immune system and growth needs.

The Center is also an integral part of the global scientific community with its multiple external collaborations with world leading research institutions and active participation in international scientific organizations.

A number of the NRC health professionals are recognized internationally for their expertise on health and nutrition.

A true picture of wellness

Tweetie de Leon-Gonzalez is the celebrity endorser of "Choose Wellness, Choose Nestlé" an advocacy first launched in March 2005 as "Let's Talk Wellness" by Nestlé Philippines. The advocacy effort seeks to build awareness of current knowledge and lifestyle practices in promoting wellness.

A busy mother, wife, and entrepreneur, Tweetie still never fails to fulfill her workout regimen be it in the gym or at home. "I've enjoyed fitness and sports since I was in my teens. It's a lifestyle that I've kept up to this day," she says.

Tweetie used to work out two times a day, three days a week. Now that she's busy with family life, she plays squash three times a week and does fitness routines like abdominal exercises and yoga.

The former model and actress passed on the need of being fit to her family. Two of her four kids are now into taekwondo while hubby Mon, a businessman, is into basketball.

"It's not very difficult for my kids to be active, because it's what they see in their parents," she says. The Gonzalez family also plays badminton together as often as they can.

Looking at Tweetie's fit body makes one wonder if she ever eats anything. Surprisingly, she does eat everything. What she wouldn't want to miss in her meals are vegetables.

"It is not a satisfying meal for me if it doesn't have vegetables," she said. Her kids, though not very keen on vegetables drink their milk everyday.

The kind of lifestyle Tweetie and her family leads is the path that leads to wellness. At an early age, kids are taught at how important clean and active living is.

Like all moms, Tweetie has her share of pressure, now that her kids are growing up. "When my kids' exam periods are happening all at the same time, when the house is a mess, when all the kids are squabbling and screaming--those are the things that stress me out," she said.

But Tweetie's health regimen is not limited to the physical aspect alone. She regularly prays which allows her to handle stress. She also goes for relaxing massages, lighting candles, and listening to music.

Like all mothers, being with her kids, no matter how active they are, or how busy she is with her semi-precious jewelry business, is her source of joy. She knows how important it is to give them equal time and attention. "Going out with them for merienda, watching a movie with them, or even eating ice cream with them, that's heaven for me," she says.

Her face lights up with a smile that means complete happiness. Rich with sound health and proper nutrition, Tweetie's whole being exudes the true meaning of wellness.

Choose Wellness

Choose Nestlé

WELLNESS HIGHLIGHT
Banana-Pineapple Smoothie

Ingredients:

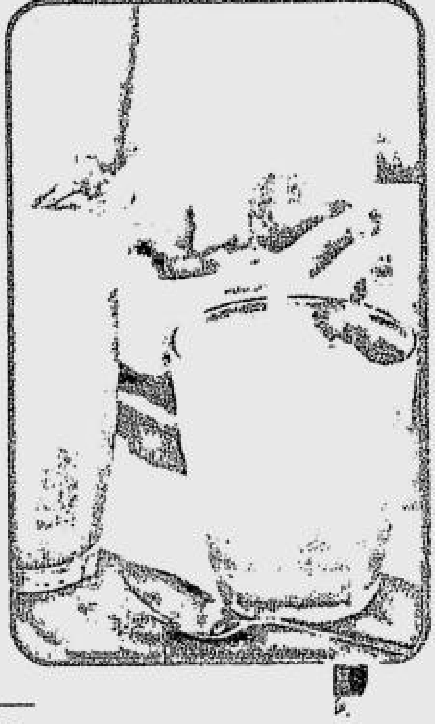
NESVIT

Procedur

[illegible]

Servings:

Nutritional Content	Per Serving:
Calories:	48(K)
CHO (g):	10
PRO (g):	1
Fats (g):	0



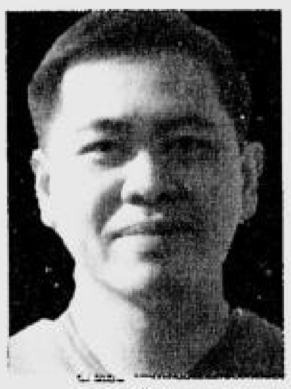
Good to know

Pineapple and bananas are both good sources of fiber and vitamin C. Fiber facilitates digestion of food while vitamin C promotes healthy skin, teeth and gum

People at Nestlé get in shape

It was a great ordeal, an extra challenge, but nonetheless fun for a number of Nestlé employees who successfully underwent a fitness and wellness program initiated by the company. Imbibing Nestlé's philosophy of living fitness and wellness, the employees sweated it out in the gym, literally ran the extra miles and kept track of the food they ate. Finally, after several weeks of a regimented lifestyle, the employees are ready to show off their new slimmer selves and newfound attitude. For Nestlé, wellness begins at home.

before



after

Jojo Yu
Business Executive Manager for Breakfast Cereals

Balance diet

A much buffer Jojo Yu has trimmed down from 260 lbs to 195 lbs. He used to feast on meat and lots of carbohydrates. Yu has learned the many benefits of taking this food group in moderation, and eating more fiber with fruits and vegetables.

Before losing those unwanted pounds, he hardly engaged in any physical activity. His work didn't require much physical effort which explains why he became overweight.

When did it dawn on him that he needed to look after his health? In July 2004, at one of the conferences that introduced a new product (NESTLÉ FITNESSE), he realized that since he was handling the product, he should also test and use it. From then on, it became his staple during breakfast.

To keep the heart in good shape, Yu has been constantly doing cardiovascular exercises at the gym three times a week.The change didn't come easy. He had few missteps and had to give up a lot of things. But all went well.

Today, Jojo is much healthier and knows how to balance his time to work and to exercise.

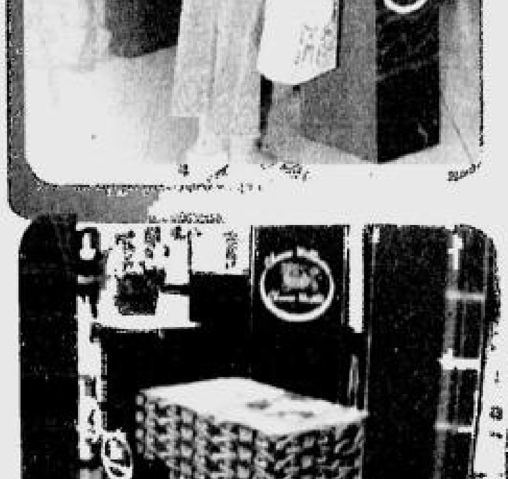
Choosing the right food

Roque Hayo Jr., is an industrial services operator in the engineering department. Joining the company's wellness challenge practically changed his lifestyle. He used to weigh over 190 lbs and has lost 40 lbs in only five months.

In the beginning, he had a difficult time adjusting to the diet that would help him get into shape. He performed daily exercises like jogging, walking, kickboxing, and aerodancing. It was on the second week of the program that he finally adjusted to the diet and physical activities.

Hayo carefully chooses the food to eats researching what type of food would help him lose weight and still remain healthy.

"I am now more comfortable in moving and performing my job than before," he says. Having lost all that weight makes him feel better about himself and his well-being too.



The usual content and nutrients labels have become consumer-friendly and easier to understand.

Consulting a nutritionist or a dietitian is not for the well-off or the health conscious only. Housewives, schoolchildren, teachers, ordinary people can now talk to food and health experts to learn the basic information about their body.

As part of "Choose Wellness, Choose Nestlé" Nestlé has put up more than 500 Wellness stations in major supermarkets nationwide. Everyone is encouraged to talk to the nutritionists in these health stations. The 5- to 10-minute session helps determine the shopper's normal height to weight ratio, or what is most commonly known as the Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI is only one of many factors used to predict risk for disease. BMI cannot be used to tell a person if he/she has a disease such as diabetes or cancer. It is important to remember that weight is only one factor that is related to disease.

Upon learning of the result, the nutritionist will suggest what food/ diet should be taken and what physical activity one must engage in to achieve the normal BMI.

Nestlé food products are now a major source of the right food information. The usual content and nutrients labels have become consumer-friendly and easier to understand. The standard listings of vitamins, minerals, fat, and calorie content are now accompanied by simple explanations, its benefits, and basic facts that can guide you in choosing the right food and drinks. At the back of each pack is the Nutrition Compass, a reader-friendly label divided into "Good to Know", "Good to Remember" and "Good to Talk".

Nestlé knows how important it is to be well-informed about the food choices we make for ourselves and our family. So the next time you're planning a meal, making a grocery list, shopping at the supermarket, it's good to know that the Nestlé experts are always there to help you make a healthier choice.

Talk to Us

We would like to hear from you. Do call us for comments and suggestions. You can reach us at:

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ENTERTAINMENT
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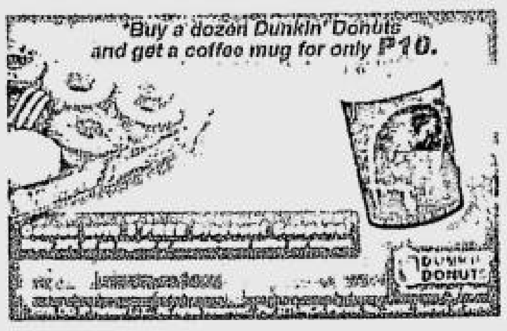
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Mama Lea goes back to work

Ms. Salonga assumes the toughest role of her stellar career yet—as multi-tasker, juggling the duties of mom and singing star

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

LEA and Rob at baby Nic's baptism: "Parenting is a grounding, humbling experience."
RYAN LIM

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

AS A STYLIST FIXES the hair of Lea Salonga, the stage and screen star is blow-drying baby Nicole Beverly's wet pants in her dressing room at the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).

Within reach, grandmother Ligaya Salonga is lulling the five-month-old baby to sleep on the sofa.

The above scene pretty well sums up the state of Lea's life right now.

Lea, who has just arrived from a doctor's appointment, is at the CCP to launch her "comeback concert of sorts," "Tomorrow: A Concert for the Future," set on Oct. 20 and 21 at the Main Theater.

Officially, the concert marks the new mom's return to show biz.

With husband Rob Chien, she has just come home from the US, where they showed off their firstborn to their relatives. She explains that she has yet to recover from jet lag, "equalize her brain" and study her repertoire.

RODEL ROTONI

She is also preparing for a new CD with recording label Sony-BMG.

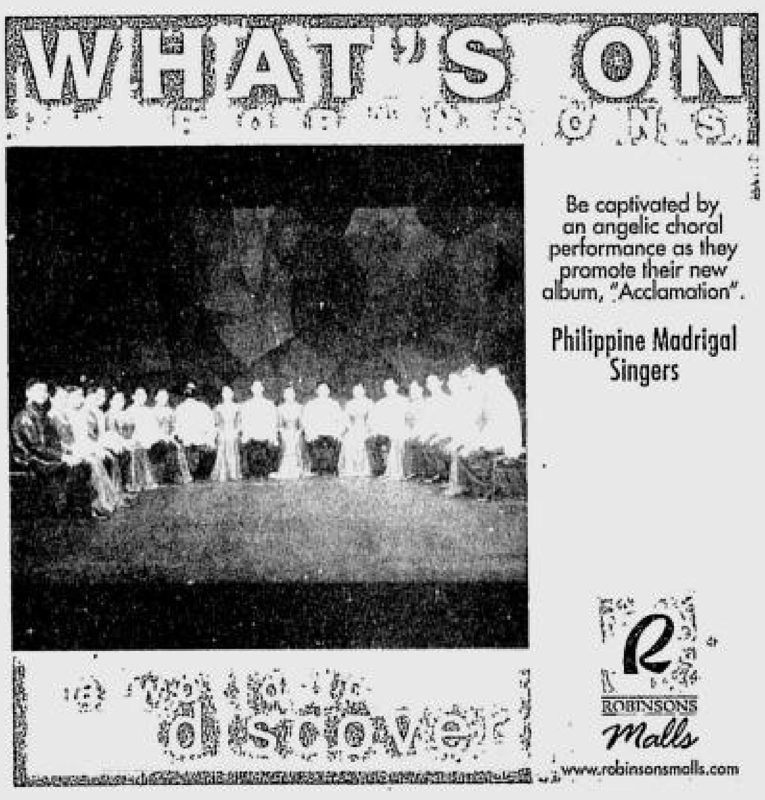
Talk about a multi-tasking mom.

These days, she would gladly give Broadway showstoppers a rest in favor of lullabies which she sings to help baby Nic doze off.

"Usually, I just hum some made-up melody that I'd forget after two seconds ... or 'Rainbow Connection,'" she tells the press gathered at the launch.

Each song assumes a whole different meaning, she tells INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive in-

MAMA/ E2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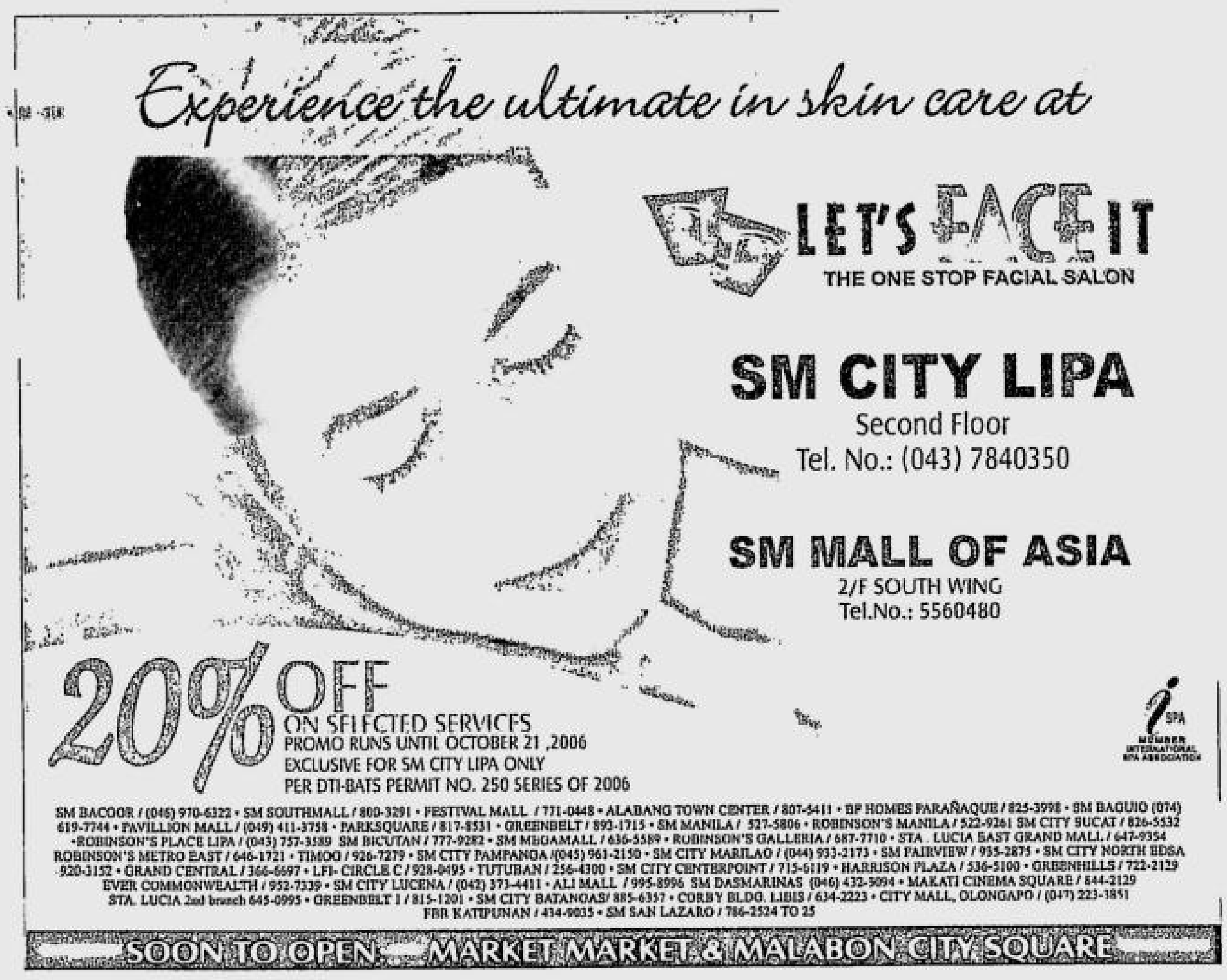
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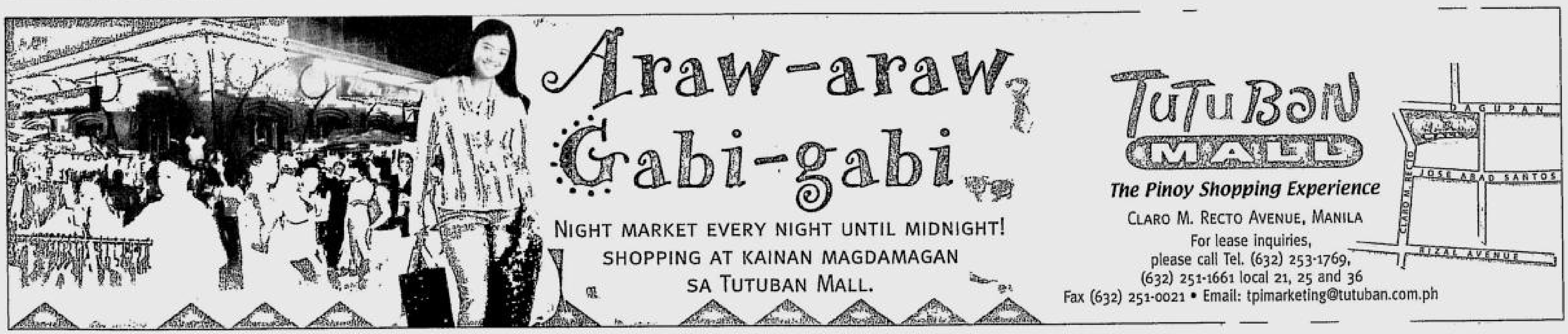
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1 THE DEVIL WEARS PRADA • THX
12:30 2:55 5:20 7:45 10:00

2 THE DEPARTED
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

3 FLY BOYS
1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

4 PULSE
1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

5 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

6 FIRST DAY HIGH
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

7 DEAD OR ALIVE
1:40 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

8 ZOOM
1:25 3:30 5:35 7:40 9:50

9 STEP UP
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

10 TWILIGHT DANCERS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

ERMITA 636-7809 to 12

1 THE DEPARTED
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

2 TWILIGHT DANCERS
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

3 FLY BOYS 11:20 2:00 4:40
STEP UP 7:40 10:00

4 FIRST DAY HIGH
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5 DEAD OR ALIVE
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6 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
11:45 1:45 3:45 5:50 7:55 10:00

7 PULSE
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1 DEAD OR ALIVE
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

2 FIRST DAY HIGH
11:15 1:45 4:15 6:45 9:10

3 THE DEPARTED
11:20 2:30 5:40 9:00

4 FLY BOYS
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

5 STEP UP
12:00 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

6 ZOOM
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7 PULSE
12:30 2:40 4:50 7:00 9:10

8 THE BREED
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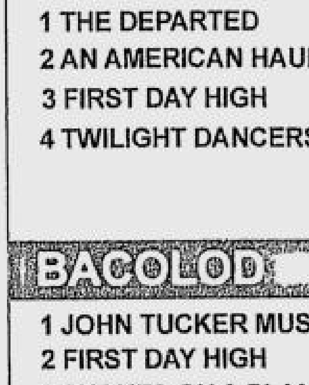

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Mama Lea goes back to work

From page E1

terview.

"Belatedly," she has formed a kinship with Kim, the mom who gave up her life for her son in "Miss Saigon."

Even her work in animated Disney films like "Aladdin" and "Mulan," as well as Hayao Miyazaki's "My Neighbor Totoro" has assumed a sweet significance now that she has little Nic in her life.

"My husband and I are big fans of Miyazaki's 'Spirited Away.' And Disney cartoons cater to a wide age range," she points out. "When Nic's old enough to watch them, I am certain I'd be watching these films with her."

In 2004's "Totoro," she provided the voice for the mom of Hollywood prodigy Dakota Fanning.

"That was a blast. In real life that doesn't happen. Dakota is way too blonde to be my child," she jests.

Turning serious, she acknowledges that "motherhood" has imbued her work with "a deeper significance."

Has parenting changed the equation for you?

Yes, things are different. Certain songs now hold a different significance.

It also changes the way you feel about certain issues. You just feel more strongly... when you see children suffering or abused... There is a more compelling thrust to do something.

This concert, for example, is for CCP's arts program for children traumatized by wars and calamities.

We should encourage art projects for the youth. I was lucky that I had Repertory Philippines. I had a really great support system when I was growing up.

Motherhood has altered my perspective.

I, for one, want to give my child and future children, the best opportunities I can give to them. I know that every parent feels the same way.

That is why I feel it's great that the CCP is giving these kids the opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable for them.

Do you remember the first time you performed at the CCP?

The very first time was in "The King and I," when I was seven years old.

The first run of "Annie," when I was nine, was also here. Then, we moved to the Meralco Theater for the repeats.

This concert is a homecoming for you?

In a way. I've done a lot of shows here so I am familiar with the dressing rooms. I know how to get from one part of the building to another. It's a familiar and, at the same time, very hallowed place for me.

This theater will always hold a special significance because this is where I first performed in front of an audience of over a thousand people.

What's the thrill you get when you're performing at the CCP Main Theater?

The thing is, before I ever stood up on that stage to perform, I was a member of the audience watching my cousin (prima ballerina) Maniya Barredo dancing onstage.

The very first time I came to a CCP dressing room, I was only five or six.

It was Maniya's dressing room, which later became my dressing room when I did "Annie."

I kinda know what it's like to be on both sides.

I was an audience member first before becoming a performer. So I know what it's like to sit in one of those red seats, seeing the big Ocampo mural go up ... as the excitement builds.

So for me, being onstage and looking out, I know that for some little girl or boy who's sitting in the audience, what he or she is watching is something special and magical.

That's the thrill I get from knowing that someone out there is hopefully having a good time as well.

Is this baby Nicole's first time at the CCP?

I think so. Yes, it is!

How do you manage your time?

An hour no longer means an hour. If, for example, I have an appointment at 12 noon, that means, I have to know several things in advance: How many times am I going to breastfeed? Do I bring this child with me to work? What is she going to wear?

"MY BABY runs my life."
RODEL ROTONI

Logistics have become more difficult.

She basically runs your life.

My entire world revolves around her. I'm at her mercy, if she's hungry, if she's wet ...

Awhile back you were blow-drying a wet pair of pants.

The stylist was doing my hair and I was blow-drying a wet pair of pants. I mean, you throw your ego out of the window when you're taking care of a child.

Is parenting a grounding experience?

Very grounding. If you are arrogant ... If you are very full of yourself, you can't be a parent. You better not even try.

You better be ready to give up a lot of yourself. But what comes back to you is so much more ...

Is your parenting style a combination of what your mom teaches you and what you learn from books?

I also do research because some of the tips from my mom are outdated.

(Mom Ligaya reacts: "Excuse me!")

But, there are a lot of timeless things.

Putting on a *bigkis* (binder) was a fad, but now doctors say not to put a binder on the baby's *pusod* (bellybutton). To let it heal and fall by itself. Another thing is starting solid foods at three months. Now, doctors recommend six months.

I went to see the doctor earlier today and he said, next month, we're starting solids, be ready with a blender or buy bottles of baby food. But, we're using a blender. I'd like her food to be as fresh as possible.

How was the US trip?

It was very exhausting because we didn't really have any help. We were on our own. It was just me and my husband. Predominantly me, because I'm breastfeeding.

Did the vacation bring you closer?

With her? Oh yah! You really bond with this child.

One of Rob's cousins noticed something funny. He was playing with her and she just cried all of a sudden. So he passed her on to Rob, but she was still wailing. It was only after Rob passed her on to me that she stopped. Aha! She wanted mommy! It's a nice feeling to know that you're wanted.

Does that make all the sleepless nights worthwhile?

After a while, you kinda miss those sleepless nights. I've learned to function on very little sleep. I don't really have any choice. But what I will do for a full night's sleep! What I would do for eight hours!

Are you working on a new album?

We're preparing it with Sony-BMG. Material is being gathered. Orchestrations and arrangements are also being made. I don't know when our release date is. In a little while, we should be starting recording very soon.

How does motherhood inform your work as a singer?

It's different now. Emotionally, it's just deeper.

It's also song-specific. There will be certain songs that obviously will not be different. But there will be songs that in some strange way will assume a whole new meaning.

For example, the song "Tomorrow," a song you've been singing since age nine?

The optimism is different. The slant is now more for children, rather than being optimistic for yourself.

It's now more about being hopeful for other people.

Three-in-one concert at Music Museum

A THREE-IN-ONE CONCERT featuring True Faith, Aiza Seguerra, Geneva Cruz and Jay-R goes on stage on Oct. 13, 8 p.m. at the Music Museum. Billed "Rhythm and Blues," the concert is produced by Gina dela Rama and Cynthia Ibay-Esguerra, with Gus Aldeguer as director.

True Faith opens the concert with past hits and latest R&B sounds from their new album. Aiza Seguerra, who joins them in a finale number, takes over on the second part with her soothing voice and acoustic sounds. The third concert showcases Geneva Cruz with 20 sexy girls doing a Beyonce-like production and Jay-R, backed up by his own dance group, for the grand finale.

Call 525-4384.

Mothballs

The new band Mothballs, composed of Gwyn (drums), Leroi (bass), Dennis (rhythm) and Carlos (vocals), performs a kind of alternative music that sets it apart from the other bands. Its renditions of songs from Audioslave and Papa Roach say it all. As the band name suggests, the members want their music to be recognized right away just as people know mothballs when they smell them. They just finished their gigs at Gweillo's Eastwood, Mayric's Bar and Center for Arts along Timog. On October 10, they will be performing at Metrobar, West Ave. Every Tuesday, they're on RJ TV's "Gimme A Break" with Gus Aldeguer, 11 p.m. to 12 midnight.

Soul Ties

Be-Live Artist Management presents an all original Filipino R&B-hiphop-soul music show dubbed "Soul Ties 2" every Thursday of October, 9 p.m., at Bagaberde in Pasig.

The show features dance artist and theater veteran Lana J., TV host and recording artist Joaquin and underground hiphop tour de force Quest. All three artists perform their compositions to be included in their upcoming albums.

Guest artists are Top Suzara, Michaelangelo, the Akafellas, the All Stars, spoken word artists, DJs and rappers. Call Roca Cruz at 0917-5001351.

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Parokya ni Edgar at '70s Bistro, Anonas, QC.

October 10

MP Strings and Brass Munkeys at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3.

Itchyworms, Silent Sanctuary and Chilitees at '70s Bistro, Anonas, QC.

Silk & Steel at Merk's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 3.

October 11

Side A at Tavern on the Square, Greenbelt 3.

Johnoy and Kakoy at '70s Bistro, Anonas, QC.

Richard Merk, Eddie K and Judith Banal at Merk's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 3.

October 12

MYMP with Dindo at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3.

Dong Abay and **Cambio** at **'70s Bistro**, Anonas, QC.

Aretha & The Souled Out Band at **Merk's Bar Bistro**, Greenbelt 3.

October 13

Regine Velasquez in her 20th anniversary concert entitled "20" at the **Araneta Coliseum.** Call 426-7531.

Fat Session at **Tavern on the Square**, Greenbelt 3.

GENEVA Cruz

WEDDING ADVISORY: A MUST-SEE MOVIE FOR THOSE WHO ARE PLANNING TO GET MARRIED SOON.
The FUNNIEST and CRAZIEST wedding comedy of the year from the company that gave you 'NOTTING HILL'!
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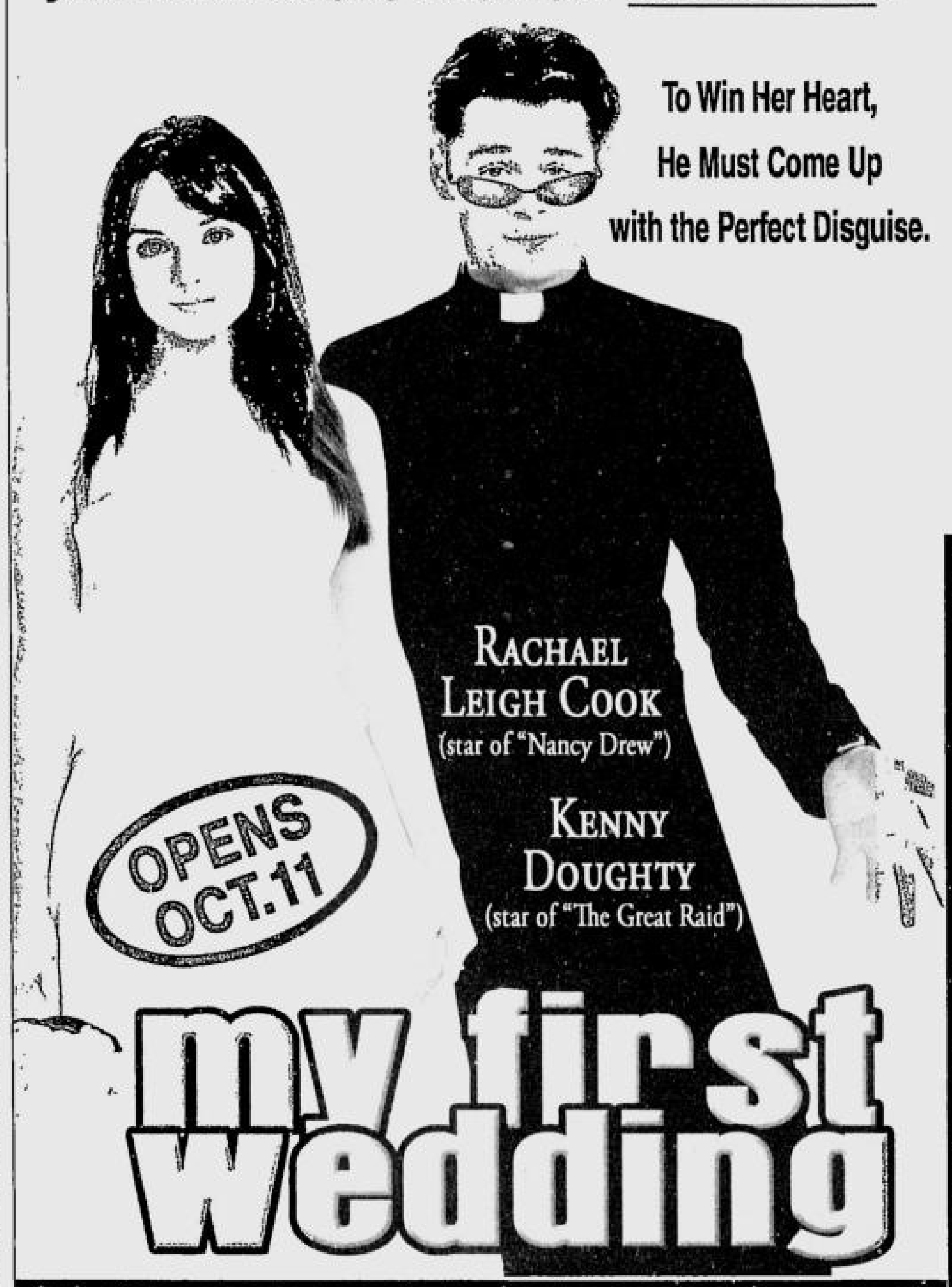
RACHAEL LEIGH COOK (star of "Nancy Drew")
KENNY DOUGHTY (star of "The Great Raid")
OPENS OCT. 11
my first wedding
LAUGH TILL YOU DROP!



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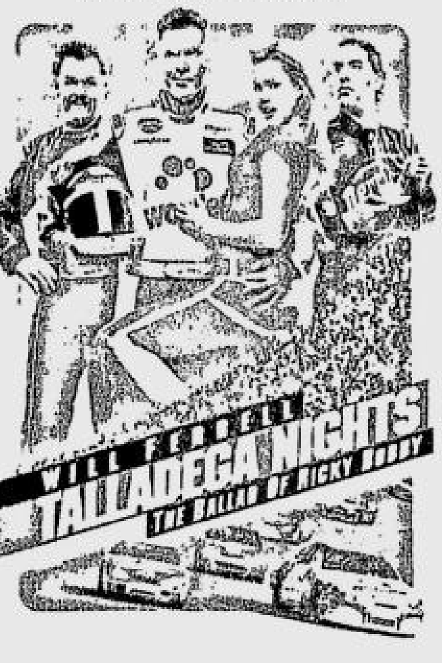
For SCREENING SCHEDULE, pls. call our CINEMA ACCESS 635-5555 or visit us www.robinsonsmovieworld.com
No Brakes. No Brains.
COMING SOON



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ZOOM 1:00 / 3:10 / 7:30
THE DEPARTED 12:10 / 3:20 / 6:30 / 9:40
FIRST DAY HIGH 2:10 / 4:40 / 7:10 / 9:40
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE 5:20 / 9:40
TALLADEGA NIGHTS 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
STEP UP 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 / 9:30
DEAD OR ALIVE 1:25 / 3:30 / 5:35 / 7:40 / 9:45
PLATINUM CINEMA
THE DEPARTED 2:40 / 5:50 / 9:00
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
ALIMALL 5
THE DEPARTED 1:40 / 4:50 / 8:00
STEP UP 12:40 / 3:10 / 5:40 / 8:10
PULSE 12:25 / 2:30 / 4:35 / 6:40 / 8:45
FIRST DAY HIGH 1:00 / 3:30 / 5:50 / 8:20
DEAD OR ALIVE 12:20 / 2:25 / 4:30 / 6:35 / 8:40
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For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph
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TWENTY - REGINE VELASQUEZ CONCERT ! October 13 & 14, Friday & Saturday - 8 pm
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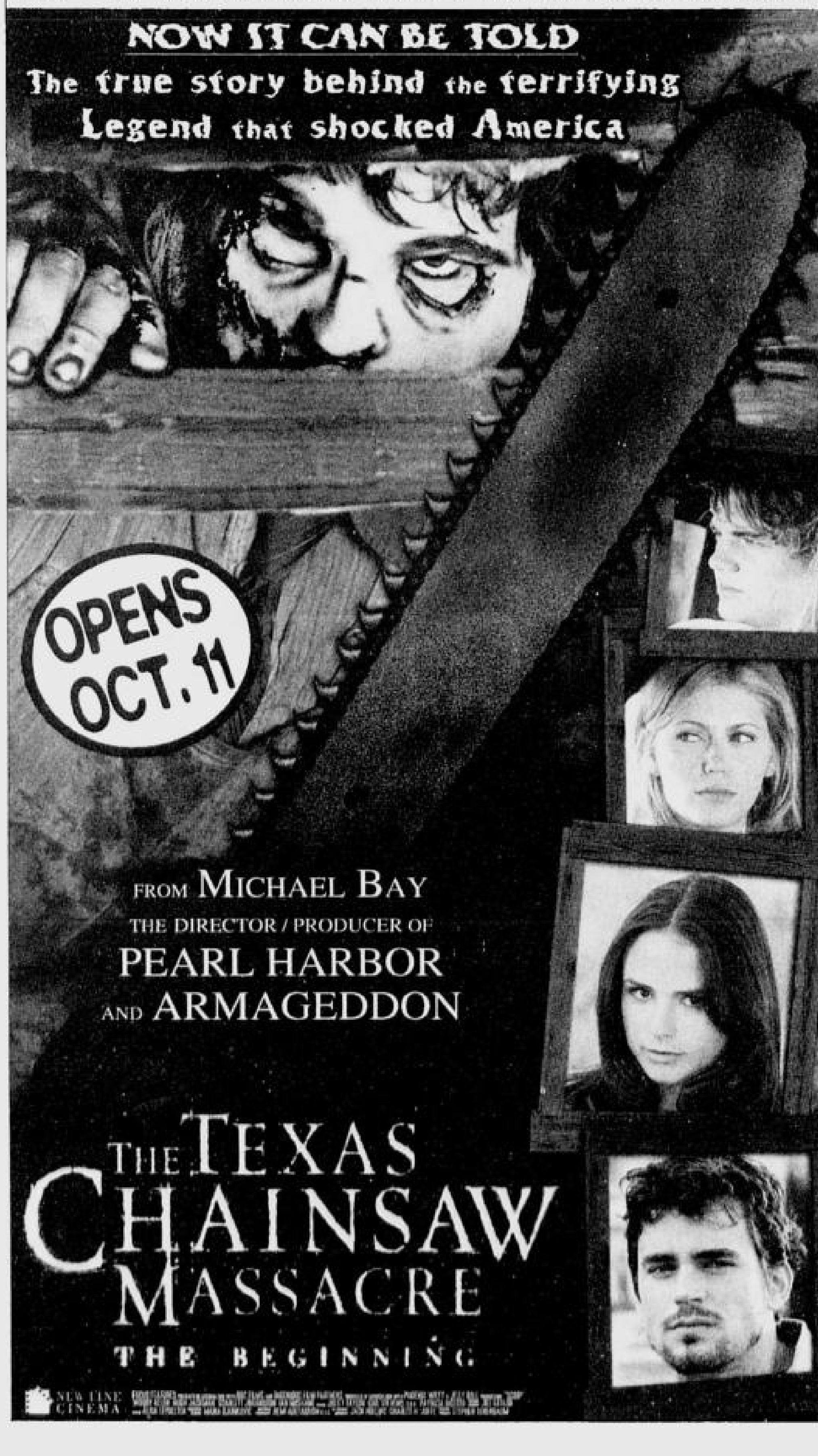
THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
THE BEGINNING
NEW LINE CINEMA



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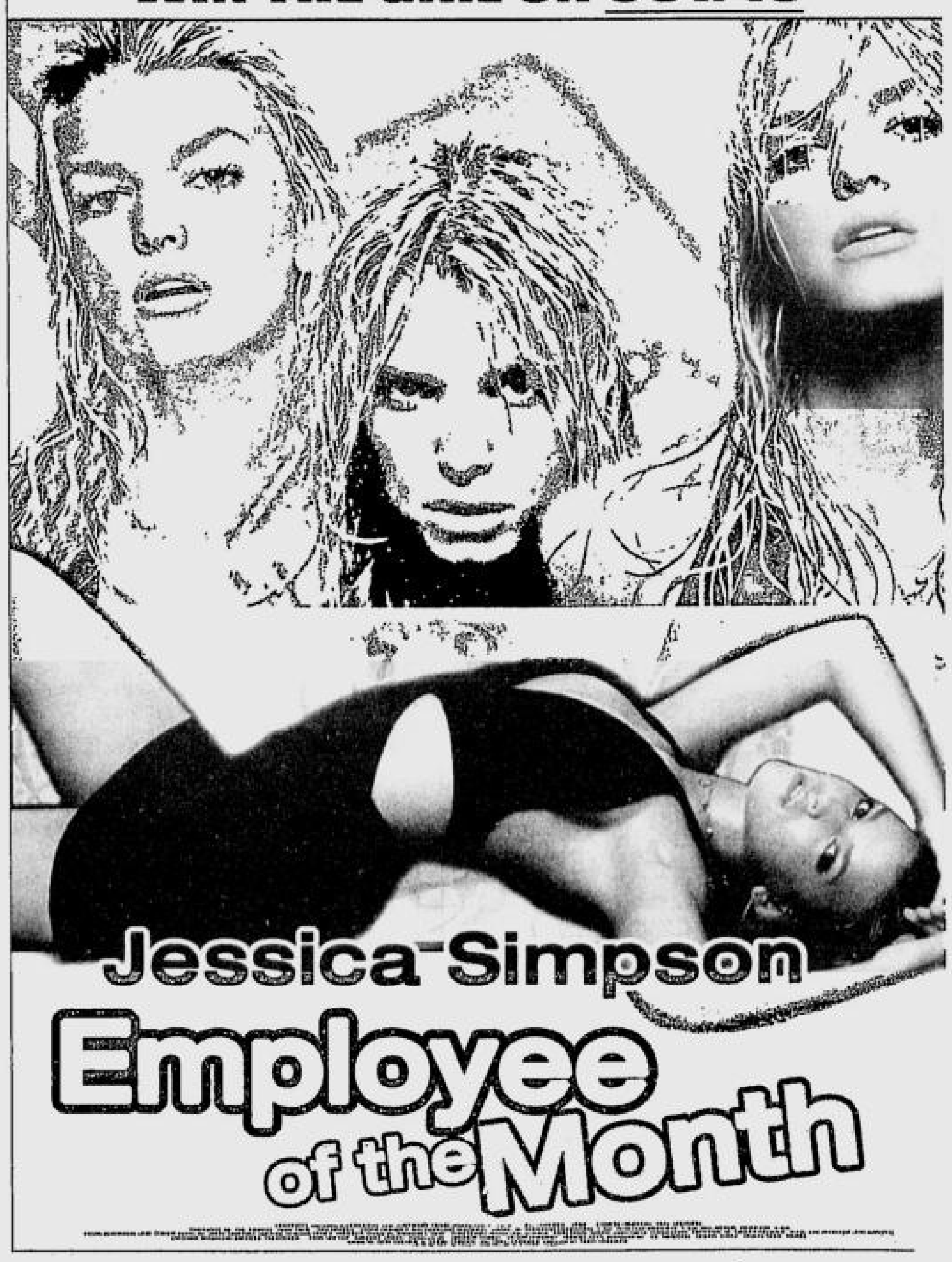
Jessica Simpson
Employee of the Month



Independent films make it to international film fests

By Marinel R. Cruz

PINOY FILMS ARE BAGGING AWARDS AND touring the globe these days.

Independent filmmakers Sari Dalena and Keith Sicat won on Sept. 30 the Best Feature Film Award during the 8th International Panorama of Independent Filmmakers awards show in Athens, Greece, for their debut feature "Rigodon."

"Rigodon" follows the "spiritual" journey of three Filipino immigrants in post-9/11 New York City "whose lives intertwine in the age of racial profiling and government crackdown." The 80-minute movie stars Joel Torre, Arthur Acuna, Chin-Chin Gutierrez, Stephanie Ruaux and Keith Barber.

"Rigodon" premiered at the Montreal World Film Festival and was also screened at the Fribourg and Cinemanila International film festivals. It was recently shown at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington DC and is set to screen at the Institute of Contemporary Art as part of the Boston Asian-American Film Festival, Austin Asian Film Festival and Chicago Filipino-American Film Festival in November.

"Rigodon" was also invited to screen at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York in January 2007.

"DONSOL"

"BAHAG Kings"

A five-member jury chose the winners, according to the Panorama Filmmakers website, www.independent.gr. Portugal's "Night Story," by Victor Candeias bagged the Best Short Film Award. Other big winners were Bangladesh's "The Peanut Seller" (by Farid Shah, Best Documentary), Brazil's "The Force" (by Cristina Pinheiro, Best Video Art) and Hungary's "Maestro" (by Geza M. Toth, Best Animation).

"The festival is the only one of its kind in South and Eastern Europe that allows all films to be played without censorship and control," according to the website.

'Donsol'

Adolf Alix's "Donsol" received an invitation to the Dominican Republic International Film Festival, shortly after bagging the Special Jury Prize in the Asian Marine Film Festival in Makuhari, Japan.

The festival will be held from Nov. 6 to 11.

"Donsol" stars Sid Lucero and Angel Aquino as two people who reluctantly fall in love despite previous failed relationships. It will compete in international film fests in Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the US and in Cairo, Egypt, late this year.

At the Fort Lauderdale film fest from Oct. 16 to Nov. 14, "Donsol" will slug it out with 10 other movies, including Pedro Almodovar's Cannes-winning "Volver."

"KALELDO"

"RIGODON"

'Kubrador'

Jeffrey Jeturian, director of the award-winning digital film "Kubrador," and lead actress Gina Pareño will be keeping a tight schedule starting this month. Jeturian and Pareño are scheduled to leave this week for the 11th Pusan International Film Festival in Korea.

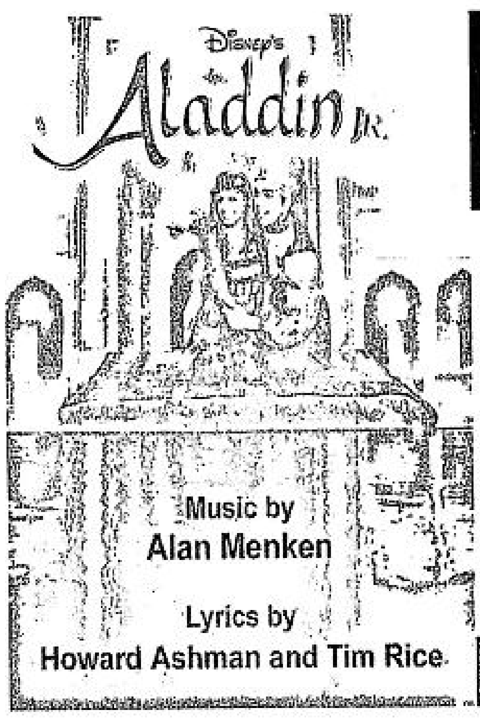
On Oct. 19, Jeturian will attend a film fest in Mumbai, India, while Pareño and "Kubrador" executive producer Joji Alonso will leave for Hawaii. They will meet up in Villadolid, Spain, sometime between Oct. 20 and 28. The director will be coming from a film fest in Tokyo, Japan.

For the whole November, Pareño and Jeturian will tour "Kubrador" in Amiens in France, Brussels in Belgium, Thessaloniki in Greece and Rome. In December, they will attend film fests in Bratislava at the Slovak Republic, Tallin in Estonia, Dubai and Suchitra in India.

'Kaleldo'

"Kaleldo (Summer Heat)," Dante Men-

INDEPENDENT/ E7



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Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	THE DEPARTED	PULSE	FIRST DAY HIGH			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION	THX CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS	TALLADEGA NIGHTS	STEP-UP	THE DEPARTED	PULSE
GB1 GREENBELT 1	STEP-UP	THE DEPARTED					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX PELICULA: 5TH SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL GUARANTEED SEATS	THX THE DEPARTED 2:00, 5:00, 8:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	FLYBOYS 1:30, 4:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	PULSE 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10, 11:10 GUARANTEED SEATS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX THE DEPARTED GUARANTEED SEATS	PULSE	STEP-UP	FLYBOYS	FIRST DAY HIGH		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	THE DEPARTED	SCOOP	THE BREED	FIRST DAY HIGH			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	DOA: DEAD OR ALIVE	THE DEPARTED	FIRST DAY HIGH	PULSE	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION		

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline 0917 6095900
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Market! Market! - 886 7519

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Anson's Exhibit October 5 to 21, 2006	Federal Hardware Exhibit Oct. 6 to 11, 2006
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Culminating Activity Sign Language Association of Cebu October 8, 2006	Call Center Job Fair October 6 to 7, 2006

GREENBELT
Cathay Pacific's Planes Exhibit
October 6 to 12

Greenbelt 1 Onstage
Repertory Philippines presents
THE BOOR & THE PROPOSAL
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Ayala MUSEUM
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September 19 to October 1, 2006
For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

PELICULA PELIKULA
THE 5TH SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL
Ayala Malls CINEMAS

October 10, 2006, Greenbelt 3 Cinema 1
4:30PM HISTORIA DE UN BESO
7:00PM NINETTE
9:30PM TIOVIVO C. 1950

Instituto Cervantes
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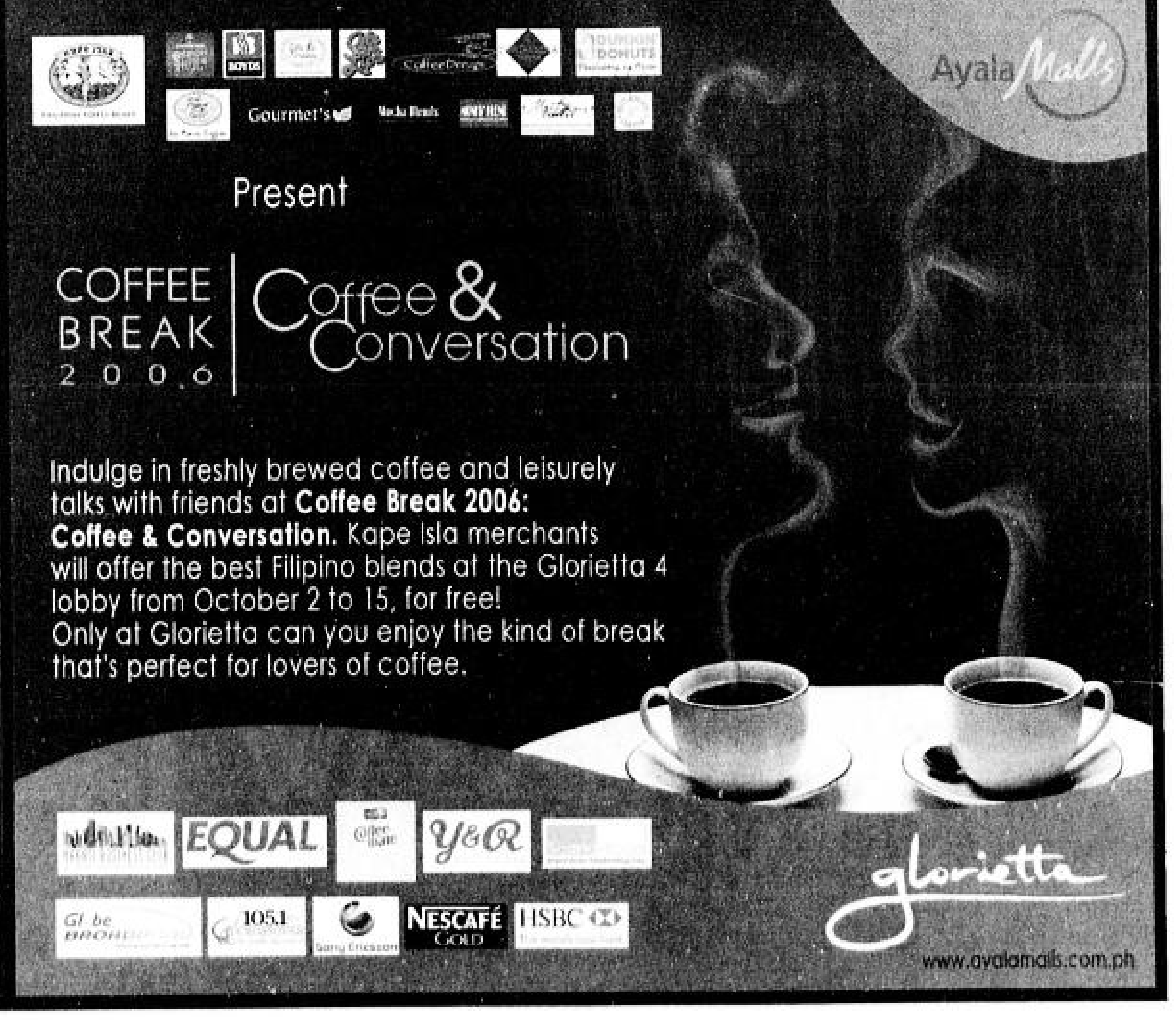
HTTP://MANILACERVANTES.ES
GREENBELT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Veteran leads line up new starrers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SYLVESTER STALLONE'S STELLAR career has had more ups and downs than a roller-coaster ride. He zoomed to the top in the action field with the "Rocky" films, but his luster dimmed due to flops like "Judge Dredd."

Last year, however, action fans were reminded that Stallone was still around and hadn't been put out to pasture, when he served as the mentor of aspiring pugilists on the hit TV reality challenge, "The Contender."

As a result, producers took a second look at the former action superstar, and now he's back on the big screen, playing the title role in "Rocky Balboa."

In the sixth film in the "Rocky" series, Stallone revisits his signature screen character, but in current age-appropriate maturity. It's a gamble, but the star's fans hope that the comeback bid will be successful, so his return to the silver screen will be for keeps.

For his part, **Mel Gibson** is finally following up on his hit "The Passion of the Christ" with another period film with dialogue in a "dead" language.

Titled "Apocalypto," the film is a mythic action-adventure set against the great Mayan civilization at its tragic decline. It tells of the Mayans' idyllic existence, which is brutally disrupted by a violent invading force.

The film was shot before Gibson's recent arrest for driving under the influence, but its box-office showing could be negatively affected by the scandal.

The controversy has been compounded by Gibson's age (you'd think that a mature man like him would have tamed his demons a long time ago), and the anti-Semitic insults he is reported to have hurled upon his arrest.

Those insults have served to retroactively confirm charges aired during the screening of "Passion" that the film was similarly anti-Jew. Gibson scoffed at that accusation, but his recent run-in with the law has made him vulnerable to the charge anew.

Gibson's fans hope that "Apocalypto" will turn out to be an ennobling and inspiring cinematic triumph, to salve the public's deep disappointment in him, and to restore him to his status as one of the film industry's leading lights.

Finally, Russell Crowe stars in "A Good Year," playing a London-based investment expert who inherits a vineyard from a late uncle. When he moves to Provence in France, however, he runs afoul of a beautiful woman from California who also lays claim to the property!

The movie's "back to the good earth" theme bodes well for its inspirational effect on viewers, while the conflict with the feisty Californian assures viewers that the comedic fur will keep flying.

Of such bracing contrasts are potentially popular films made.

Spanish Film Festival

ONGOING until Oct. 15 is this year's Spanish Film Festival, with 23 movies being screened at Cinema 1, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center. Organized by Instituto Cervantes, the film fest also launches Fiesta, the month-long Spanish festival for culture and the arts.

A new feature of the film fest is the midnight screening of selected films. On Oct. 6, 7, 13 and 14, screenings include "Amor Idiota," the comedy "Ninette" and the dance documentary "Iberia."

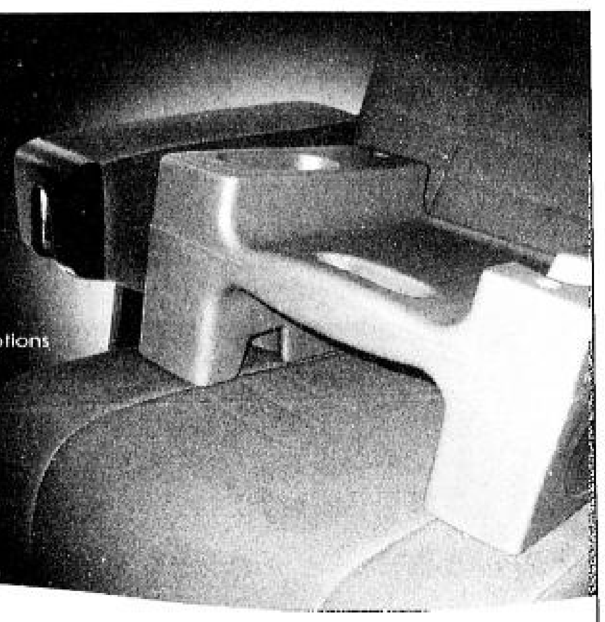
For the screening schedule and other festival sidelights, call 526-1482 to 85, or log on to http://manila.cervantes.es.

Cassie on Channel V

THE SPOTLIGHT on Channel V this month is on young singer CASSIE, who burst onto the New York music scene completely by accident. After being discovered downtown, she was introduced to P. Diddy's makeup artist, and **Ryan Leslie** produced a song for her which caught the attention of **Tommy Mottola**. Channel V's feature on Cassie will be telecast at 6 p.m. on Oct. 11.

Also on Channel V, "Backpackers" premieres at 10 p.m. on Oct. 10. Shot nonstop over 12 months with three cameras and on over 27,000 minutes of videotape, the reality series follows three men who decide to leave their everyday lives behind and venture into the unknown world of adventure and misadventure.

A Seat fit for the Li'l King



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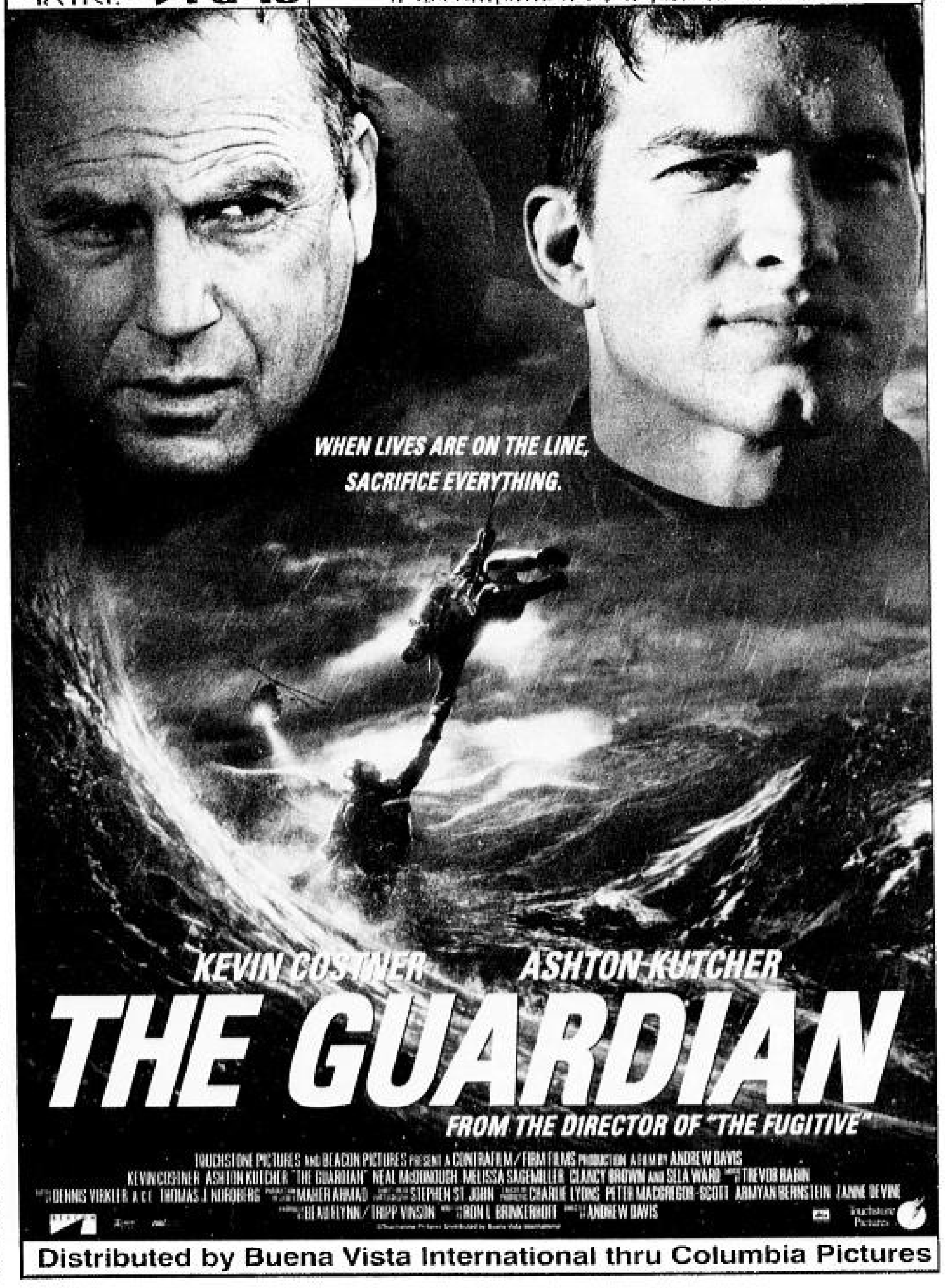
OPENS OCTOBER 11

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


WHEN LIVES ARE ON THE LINE,
SACRIFICE EVERYTHING.
KEVIN COSTNER
ASHTON KUTCHER
THE GUARDIAN
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE FUGITIVE"
TOUCHSTONE PICTURES AND BEACON PICTURES PRESENT A CONTRAFILM/FIRM FILMS PRODUCTION A FILM BY ANDREW DAVIS
KEVIN COSTNER ASHTON KUTCHER "THE GUARDIAN" NEAL McDONOUGH MELISSA SAGEMILLER CLANCY BROWN AND SELA WARD TREVOR RABIN
DENNIS VIRKLER A.C.E. THOMAS J. NORDBERG MAHER AHMAD STEPHEN ST. JOHN CHARLIE LYONS PETER MACGREGOR-SCOTT ARMYAN BERNSTEIN ZANNE DEVINE
BEAU FLYNN / TRIPP VINSON RON L. BRINKERHOFF ANDREW DAVIS
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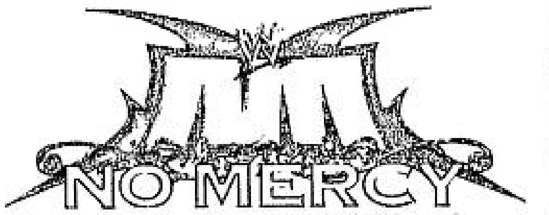

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•Oct 25 STICK IT	•Nov 22 THANK YOU FOR SMOKING

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PULSE
THE DEPARTED
TALLADEGA NIGHTS
FLY BOYS
ZOOM
PREMIERE CINEMA
FIRST DAY HIGH
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
THE DEPARTED
CENTERSTAGE
STEP UP
CINEMA 1
THE DEPARTED
CINEMA 2
ZOOM
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THE DEPARTED
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEVIL WEARS PRADA
STEP UP
PULSE
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE DEPARTED
FIRST DAY HIGH
ZOOM
TALLADEGA NIGHTS
THE BREED
FLY BOYS

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
PHILIPPINE IDOL
FIRST DAY HIGH
STEP UP
DEAD OR ALIVE
TALLADEGA NIGHTS
ZOOM
FLY BOYS
PULSE
POSSESSED BY EVIL
WICKER MAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
SCOOP
THE BREED
CRANK
DEAD OR ALIVE
STEP UP
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE DEPARTED
ZOOM
PULSE
YOU ARE THE ONE
FLY BOYS
MONSTER HOUSE

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
PULSE
STEP UP
FIRST DAY HIGH
WICKER MAN
THE BREED
YOU ARE THE ONE
FLY BOYS
ZOOM

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
THE DEPARTED
PULSE
STEP UP
DEAD OR ALIVE
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
PULSE
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
STEP UP
INGRATA
ZOOM
FLY BOYS
THE BREED

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
THE DEPARTED
STEP UP
FIRST DAY HIGH
FLY BOYS

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
FLY BOYS
PULSE
STEP UP
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE DEPARTED
THE BREED
ZOOM
TALLADEGA NIGHTS
CRANK
WICKER MAN
POSSESSED BY EVIL

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
REINCARNATION
FIRST DAY HIGH
YOU, ME AND DUPREE
ZOOM

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
FLY BOYS

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
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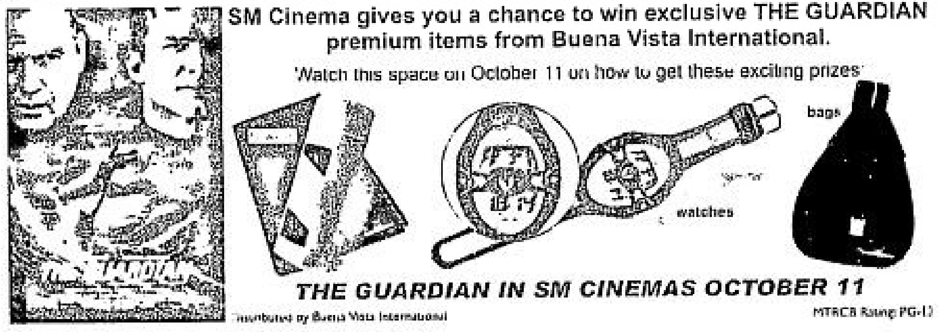
PROMO

Watch And Win at SM Cinema

SM Cinema gives you a chance to win exclusive THE GUARDIAN premium items from Buena Vista International.
Watch this space on October 11 on how to get these exciting prizes



THE GUARDIAN IN SM CINEMAS OCTOBER 11
Distributed by Buena Vista International
MTRCB Rating PG-13

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THE BREED
ZOOM
THE DEPARTED
DEAD OR ALIVE
FLY BOYS
FIRST DAY HIGH
YOU ARE THE ONE
SNAKES ON A PLANE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
THE DEPARTED
SNAKES ON A PLANE
WICKER MAN
ZOOM
DOMINO
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
DEAD OR ALIVE
FIRST DAY HIGH
SNAKES ON A PLANE
STAY ALIVE

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
MORTUARY
DEVIL WEARS PRADA
FIRST DAY HIGH
ZOOM

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)8637881-85
THE DEPARTED
ZOOM
YOU ARE THE ONE
WICKER MAN
PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LIPA
DEVIL WEARS PRADA
DEAD OR ALIVE
ZOOM
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
ZOOM
SNAKES ON A PLANE
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
THE DEPARTED
SNAKES ON A PLANE
THE BREED
FIRST DAY HIGH

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
FIRST DAY HIGH
THE DEPARTED
ZOOM
DEAD OR ALIVE

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
FIRST DAY HIGH
SNAKES ON A PLANE
FLY BOYS
YOU, ME AND DUPREE

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
DEVIL WEARS PRADA
THE BREED
THE DEPARTED
SCOOP
PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
WICKER MAN
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEAD OR ALIVE

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SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
RESERVED
JOHN TUCKER MUST DIE
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEVIL WEARS PRADA
SCOOP
RESERVED
WICKER MAN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
THE DEPARTED
PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
FIRST DAY HIGH
DEAD OR ALIVE
WICKER MAN
THE BREED

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
SCOOP
FIRST DAY HIGH
PAGDADALAGA NI MAXIMO OLIVEROS
DEVIL WEARS PRADA

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EVENT CALENDAR

MAXMEDIA presents

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MEGAMALL Cinema 10

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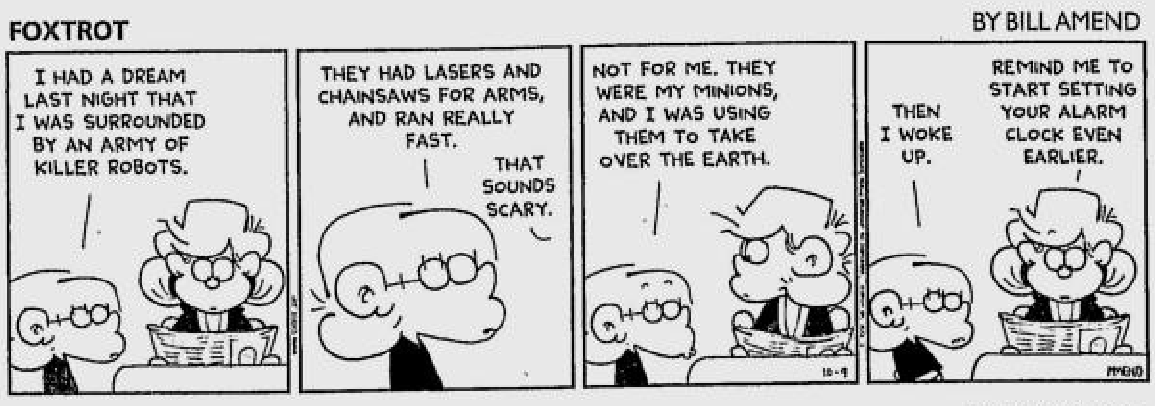
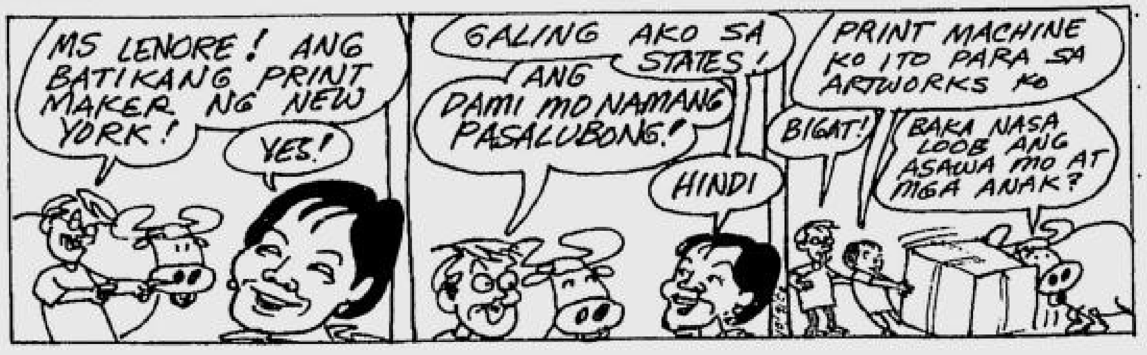
*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

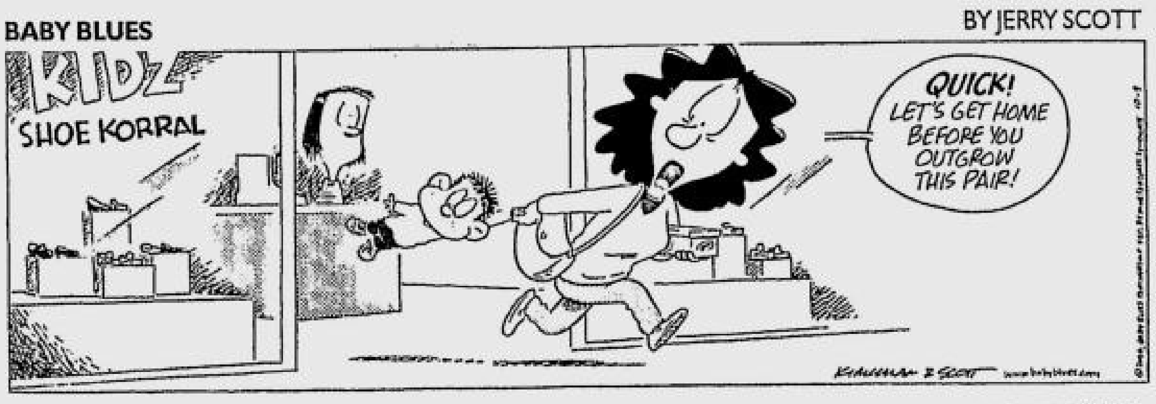
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


I HAD A DREAM LAST NIGHT THAT I WAS SURROUNDED BY AN ARMY OF KILLER ROBOTS.
THEY HAD LASERS AND CHAINSAWS FOR ARMS, AND RAN REALLY FAST.
THAT SOUNDS SCARY.
NOT FOR ME. THEY WERE MY MINIONS, AND I WAS USING THEM TO TAKE OVER THE EARTH.
THEN I WOKE UP.
REMIND ME TO START SETTING YOUR ALARM CLOCK EVEN EARLIER.
10-9

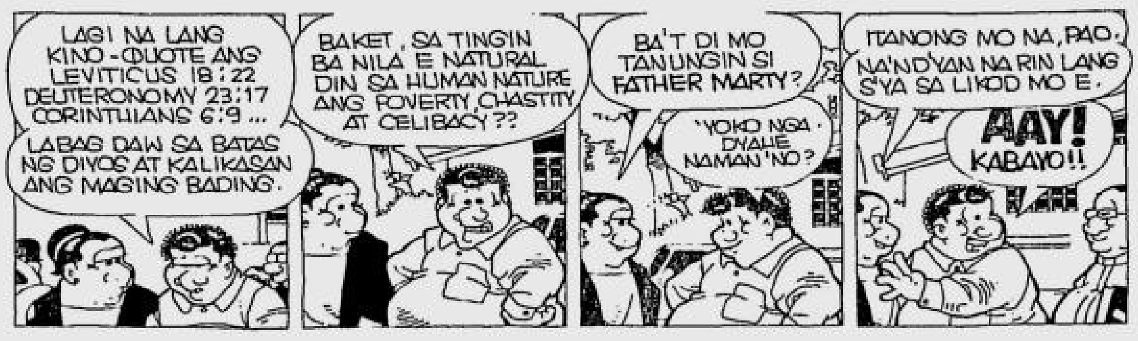
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


MS LENORE! ANG BATIKANG PRINT MAKER NG NEW YORK!
YES!
GALING AKO SA STATES!
ANG DAMI MO NAMANG PASALUBONG!
HINDI
PRINT MACHINE KO ITO PARA SA ARTWORKS KO
BIGAT!
BAKA NASA LOOB ANG ASAWA MO AT MGA ANAK?

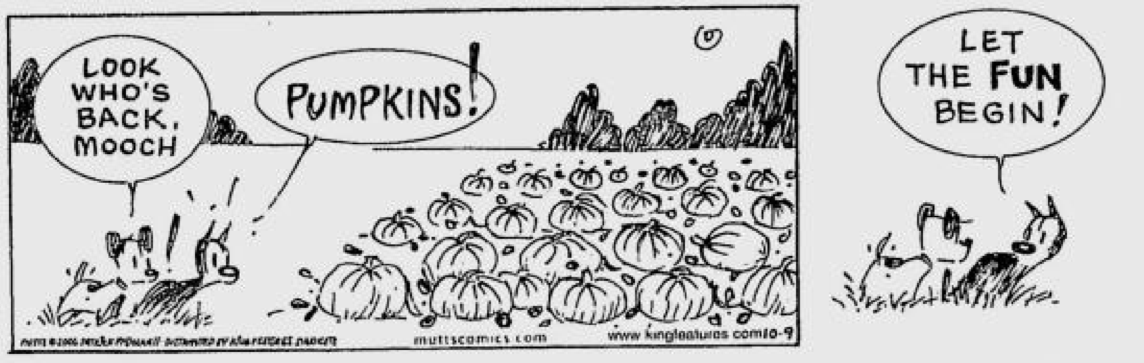
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


KIDZ SHOE KORRAL
QUICK! LET'S GET HOME BEFORE YOU OUTGROW THIS PAIR!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

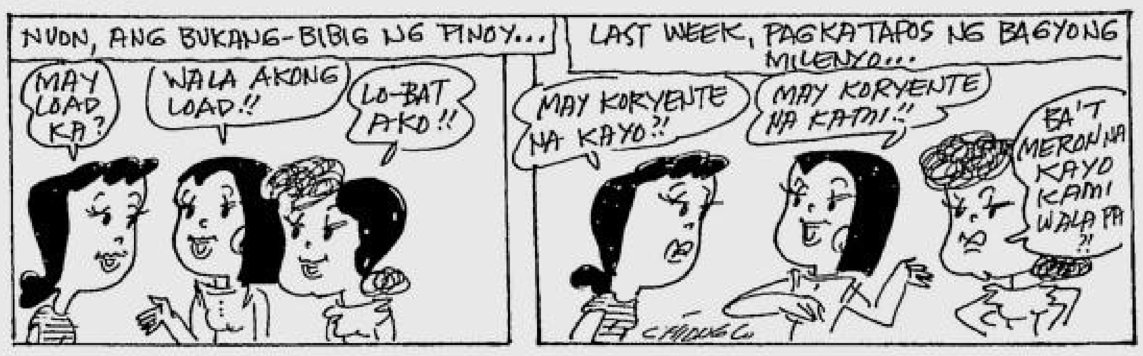
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


LAGI NA LANG KINO-QUOTE ANG LEVITICUS 18:22 DEUTERONOMY 23:17 CORINTHIANS 6:9...
LABAG DAW SA BATAS NG DIYOS AT KALIKASAN ANG MAGING BADING.
BAKET, SA TINGIN BA NILA E NATURAL DIN SA HUMAN NATURE ANG POVERTY, CHASTITY AT CELIBACY??
BA'T DI MO TANUNGIN SI FATHER MARTY?
'YOKO NGA. DYAHE NAMAN 'NO?
ITANONG MO NA, PAO. NA'NDYAN NA RIN LANG SYA SA LIKOD MO E.
AAY! KABAYO!!

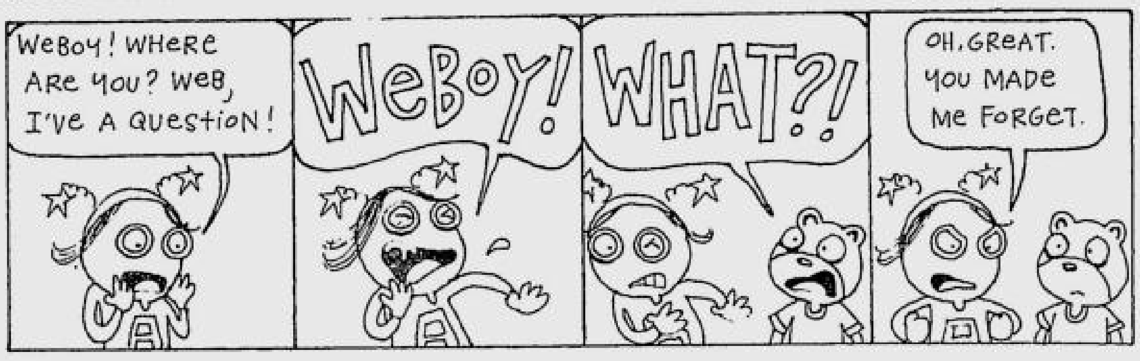
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


LOOK WHO'S BACK, MOOCH
PUMPKINS!
LET THE FUN BEGIN!
muttscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com 10-9

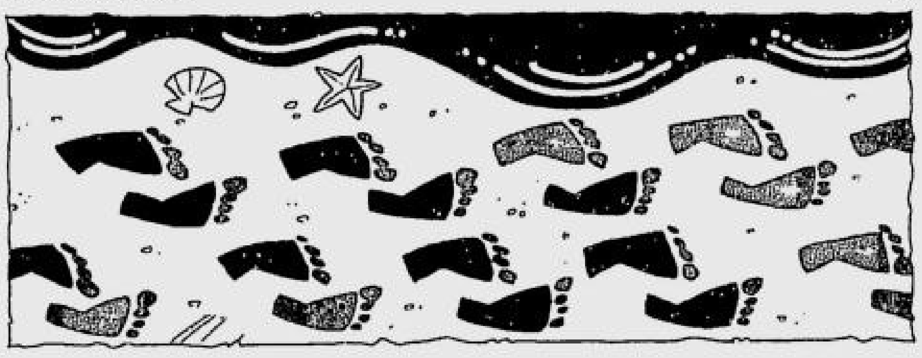
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NUON, ANG BUKANG-BIBIG NG PINOY...
MAY LOAD KA?
WALA AKONG LOAD!!
LO-BAT AKO!!
LAST WEEK, PAGKATAPOS NG BAGYONG MILENYO...
MAY KORYENTE NA KAYO?!
MAY KORYENTE NA KAMI!!
BA'T MERON NA KAYO KAMI WALA PA ?!
C. CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

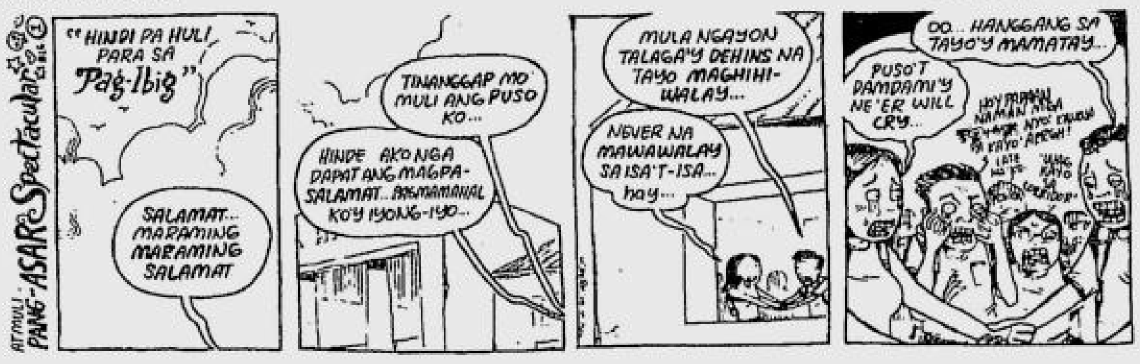

WeBoy! WHERE Are You? WeB, I've A QuesTion!
WeBoy!
WHAT?!
OH, GREAT. You MADE Me ForGeT.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

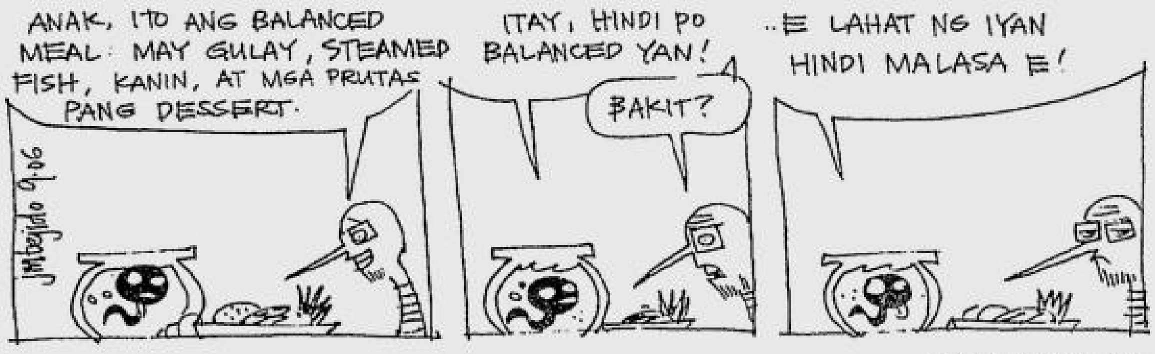


FOOT-PRINTS IN THE SAND AND THE GUIMARAS OIL SPILL

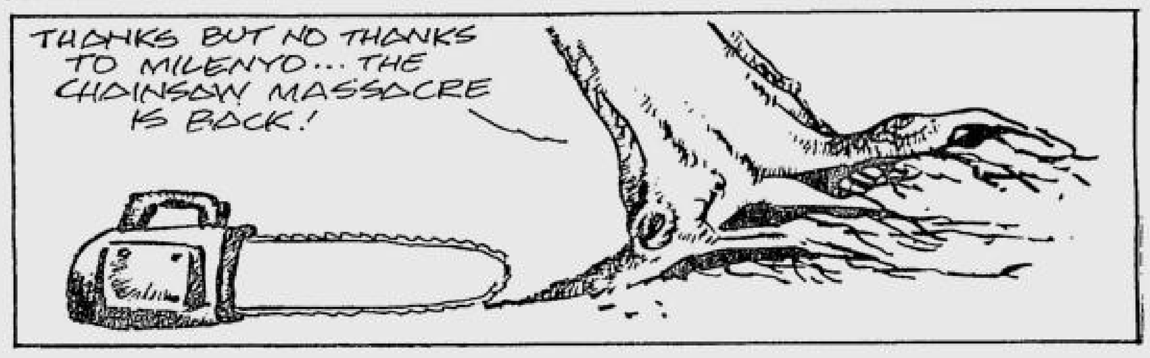
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


AT MULI! PANG-ASAR Spectacular
"HINDI PA HULI PARA SA Pag-Ibig"
SALAMAT... MARAMING MARAMING SALAMAT
TINANGGAP MO MULI ANG PUSO KO...
HINDE AKO NGA DAPAT ANG MAGPA-SALAMAT... PAGMAMAHAL KO'Y IYONG-IYO...
MULA NGAYON TALAGA'Y DEHINS NA TAYO MAGHIHI-WALAY...
NEVER NA MAWAWALAY SA ISA'T-ISA... hay...
OO... HANGGANG SA TAYO'Y MAMATAY...
PUSO'T DAMDAMI'Y NE'ER WILL CRY...

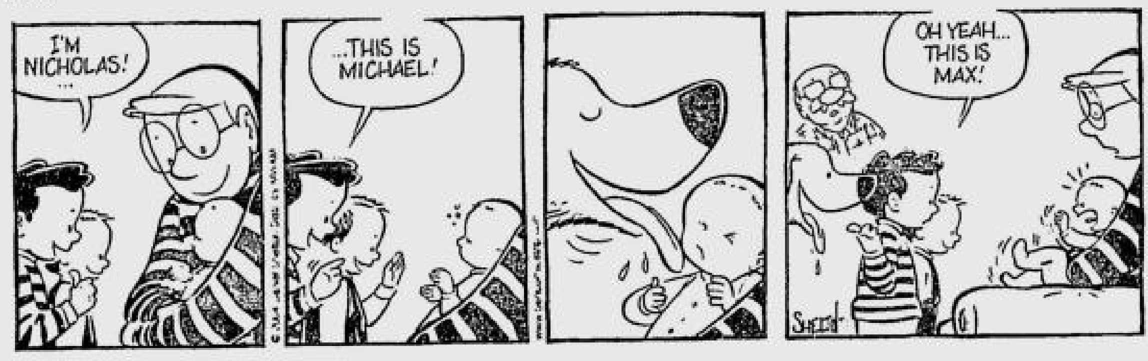
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANAK, ITO ANG BALANCED MEAL: MAY GULAY, STEAMED FISH, KANIN, AT MGA PRUTAS PANG DESSERT.
ITAY, HINDI PO BALANCED YAN!
BAKIT?
..E LAHAT NG IYAN HINDI MALASA E!
JMTejido 9.06

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


THANKS BUT NO THANKS TO MILENYO... THE CHAINSAW MASSACRE IS BACK!

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'M NICHOLAS!
...THIS IS MICHAEL!
OH YEAH... THIS IS MAX!

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Witticism
5 Lacks
10 Brainstorm
14 Citrus hybrid
15 Really detest
16 Skye caps
17 Hired thug
18 Use a loom
19 The like
20 Hit by the Left Banke
23 First gear
25 Philosophical ending
26 Change
27 Obliterate
29 Letter flourish
32 Hit by the Ventures
35 Again, in music
38 __-bitty
39 Swelter
40 Poet Van Duyn
41 Oh yeah, __ who?
42 Hit by Aerosmith
44 Ball favorite
45 Spoils
46 Computer language std.
49 Actor Neill
51 Fairness-in-hiring letters
52 Hit by the Everly Brothers
57 Ventilation duct
58 Daily record
59 Like community property
62 Friendly leader?
63 Perry or Havelock
64 Part of B&O
65 Young men
66 Arrests
67 President Polk's middle name

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14				■	15					■	16			
17				■	18					■	19			
■	■	20		21						22				
23	24		■	25			■	■	■	26				
27			28		■	■	29	30	31			■	■	■
32					33	34					■	35	36	37
38				■	39					■	40			
41			■	42						43				
■	■	■	44					■	■	45				
46	47	48			■	■	■	49	50		■	51		
52					53	54	55				56		■	■
57				■	58					■	59		60	61
62				■	63					■	64			
65				■	66					■	67			

By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

10/9/06

DOWN
1 Little pitcher
2 Self-image
3 Ballroom dance
4 Singer Turner
5 Peddles
6 Crosswise, nautically
7 "Pygmalion" playwright
8 Classic Chevy
9 Low card
10 What history often repeats?
11 Intimidate
12 Host
13 Son of Jacob
21 Invented facts
22 Precipitate
23 Puppeteer Shari
24 Use a soapbox
28 Planetarium vista
29 Vampire killer
30 Once, once
31 Justice Bader Ginsburg
33 Spoken
34 Former Steelers coach Chuck
35 Baseball commissioner, 1969-84
36 Asinine
37 Final authority
40 E. Lansing sch.
42 Small dam
43 "__ la Douce"
44 Chopper enthusiasts
46 Very disturbing
47 Spicy sauce
48 Supplied hints
49 Get into your birthday suit?
50 Chasm
53 Mid-month time
54 Gold-coated
55 Ring around the moon
56 Pan handler?
60 __ de la Plata
61 Red or White team

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	R	C	A	D	E	■	E	Y	E	H	O	L	E	S
T	H	A	N	E	S	■	M	A	N	A	L	I	V	E
H	E	R	O	I	C	■	E	N	G	R	A	V	E	S
L	O	A	N	S	H	A	R	K	■	I	N	E	R	T
E	L	M	■	T	E	N	S	E	D	■	D	O	S	E
T	O	E	D	■	W	O	O	E	R	S	■	N	O	T
I	G	L	O	O	■	A	N	S	E	L	M	■	■	■
C	Y	S	T	I	C	■	■	■	D	E	A	L	E	R
■	■	■	E	L	E	V	E	N	■	D	I	A	N	E
A	M	T	■	Y	E	O	M	A	N	■	N	U	D	E
B	A	R	B	■	S	U	P	P	E	D	■	S	A	N
S	N	O	O	T	■	C	R	E	P	I	T	A	N	T
U	N	C	L	O	T	H	E	■	A	V	E	N	G	E
R	E	H	A	S	H	E	S	■	L	E	A	N	E	R
D	R	E	S	S	E	R	S	■	I	D	L	E	R	S

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10/9/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Many of you are extremely talented. (This can be challenging if you have to make choices.) You have an interest in psychology and what makes people tick. You're intuitive, and because you have a magnetic quality to your personality, people are attracted to you. (You have style!) This year you will wrap up something you've been involved with for nine years.

Birthdate of: John Lennon, musician; Brandon Routh, actor; Tony Shalhoub actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You're willing to do whatever it takes to keep people happy. You're not being a martyr about this; it just seems to be the right thing to do

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're giving serious thought to something. At first, it might be duty that prompts you, but soon you'll help somebody simply because it's the right thing to do.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Many of you are in love. Your idealism about art, romance, creative projects and working with children is very strong. You truly want to help in a positive, beautiful way.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Despite some stress or missed communications earlier in the day, you feel a growing concern or sympathy for a family member now. Meanwhile, many of you are considering a luxurious purchase for your home.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Communications with others are up and down today (minor glitches). The good news is that your ability to communicate and your sense of empathy with others are growing stronger

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Think twice before you spend money today or do anything with financial transactions. This is not a good day. However, tomorrow definitely is!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Postpone financial decisions and major shopping until tomorrow. There are too many minor obstacles today. Tomorrow is a much better day for all kinds of opportunities

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Some of you are harboring a secret right now. (You have no choice.) Dig in and do some research today. You will learn something useful.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): After the dust settles in dicey conversations with friends today, the mood changes. You'll find others are sympathetic and ready to help. Cooperation is easy!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a poor day to make an important pitch to bosses, parents or VIPs. Bide your time and wait until tomorrow. (You might be able to push for a raise or a promotion.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're a humanitarian. You want to make the world a better place. Ignore today's hassles. Believe in your gut instinct to make a positive difference to someone far away.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Don't try to figure out how to share something with someone today. This is not a good day to attack this issue. Tomorrow you will know what to do.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

6	4			3			2	7
3	2			9			6	5
			7	2				
		4	1				8	
	3	6		4		7	5	
	8				3	6		
				1	9			
8	6			5			4	1
4	7			8			9	3

Difficulty Level ★
10/09

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	3	6	9	7	1	5	8	2
5	2	1	4	3	8	6	7	9
8	7	9	2	5	6	1	4	3
6	5	2	3	8	7	4	9	1
1	8	4	5	2	9	3	6	7
3	9	7	6	1	4	8	2	5
9	6	5	7	4	3	2	1	8
7	1	3	8	6	2	9	5	4
2	4	8	1	9	5	7	3	6

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

Indie films . . .

From page E4

doza's follow-up to his award-winning film "Masahista," will take part in three international film festivals late this year.

The film will be screened in Rome (Oct. 12 to 20), Vienna in Austria (Oct. 13 to 25) and Hawaii (Oct. 19 to Nov. 5)

"Kaleldo" lead actress Cherry Pie Picache, who will attend all the screenings, plays a lesbian tricycle driver. The movie also stars Angel Aquino, Juliana Palermo and Johnny Delgado.

'Bahag Kings' and 'Rugby Boyz'

Independent filmmaker Khavn dela Cruz has received an invitation to be part of the jury in the 10th Jihlava International Documentary Film Festival in Jihlava, Czech Republic.

The film fest is the biggest festival for documentaries in Central Europe, according to the website www.eastsilver.net. It will be held from Oct. 24 to 29.

Dela Cruz's full-length films, "Bahag Kings" and "Kamias: Alaala ng Paglimot (Memory of Forgetting)," will be screened at the Jihlava film fest as well his four short films—"Can&Slippers," "Our Daily Bread," "Rugby Boyz" and "John Cage."

From Oct. 19 to 22, Dela Cruz will take part in the 4th Bangkok World Film Festival, where his film, "Mondomanila: How I Fixed My Hair After a Rather Long Journey," will be screened.

"Mondomanila" is an adaptation of the Palanca grand prize winning novel by Norman Wilwayco, "Kung Paano ko Inayos ang Buhok ko Matapos ang Mahaba-haba Ring Paglalakbay." Raya Martin's film, "Independencia" also received an invitation for screening.

Dela Cruz has just arrived from the Ismailia International Film Festival for Documentary and Short Films in Egypt, where "Can&Slippers" was shown.

'RUGBY Boyz'

After its screening during the World Cup in Berlin in August, "Can&Slippers" also went to the Lucania Film Festival in Italy and then to Off-Courts Short Film Festival in Trouville-sur-mer, France.

Dela Cruz's other short film, "Rugby Boyz," will be shown at the Shoot Me Film Festival, The Hague, Netherlands, on Oct. 26-29 and at the L'Alternativa 2006: 13th Barcelona Independent Film Festival on Nov. 10-18.

"Rugby Boyz" received a Special Mention from the Jury of the Minister President of North Rhine-Westphalia of the Oberhausen International Short Film Festival in Germany.

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 ZOOM
1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30
G

2 THE DEPARTED
1:55, 5:05, 8:15, 11:15
R-13

3 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00
R13

4 FLYBOYS 1:45, 4:45 PG-13
STEP UP 8:35, 11:00 PG-13

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 THE DEPARTED
MTRCB R-13
12 30, 3 40, 6 50, 10.00

2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
MTRCB. R-13
12 00, 2 30, 5 00, 7:30, 10:00

3 PULSE
MTRCB R-13
1 25, 3.30, 5.35, 7:40, 9:45

4 STEP UP
MTRCB PG-13
12.00, 2 30, 5.00, 7 30, 10 00

PREMIERE THEATRE
ZOOM
MTRCB GP
1 30, 3 30, 5 30, 7 30, 9 30

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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On Mondays and Tuesdays, starting August 14, enjoy special prices of P99 00 for Cinemas 1-4, P120 for the Premiere Theatre (exclusive of food and drinks)
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☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PULSE R13 2:30,4:30,6:30,8:30	THE DEPARTED R13 2:10,5:10,8:10	TALLADEGA NIGHTS: THE BALLAD OF RICKY BOBBY R13 1:10,3:25,5:40,7:55,10:10
FLYBOYS PG13 1:30,4:20,7:10	ZOOM G 1:00,3:00,5:00,7:00	THE DEPARTED R13 1:30,4:30,7:30,10:30

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41
MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – FREE SEATING – MONDAY-FRIDAY.

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GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 STEP UP // FLYBOYS
11:35 , 1:55 // 5:00
7:50 , 10:35
PG-13

CINEMA 2 TALLADEGA NIGHTS
12:40 , 3:15 , 5:45
8:15 , 10:40
R13

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE
GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3 THE DEPARTED
12:40, 3:45, 6:50,
9:55
R-13

CINEMA 4 PULSE
12:40 , 2:45 , 4:50
6:55 , 9:00
R-13

CINEMA 5 THE DEPARTED
10:20, 1:25, 4:30,
7:35, 10:40
R-13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

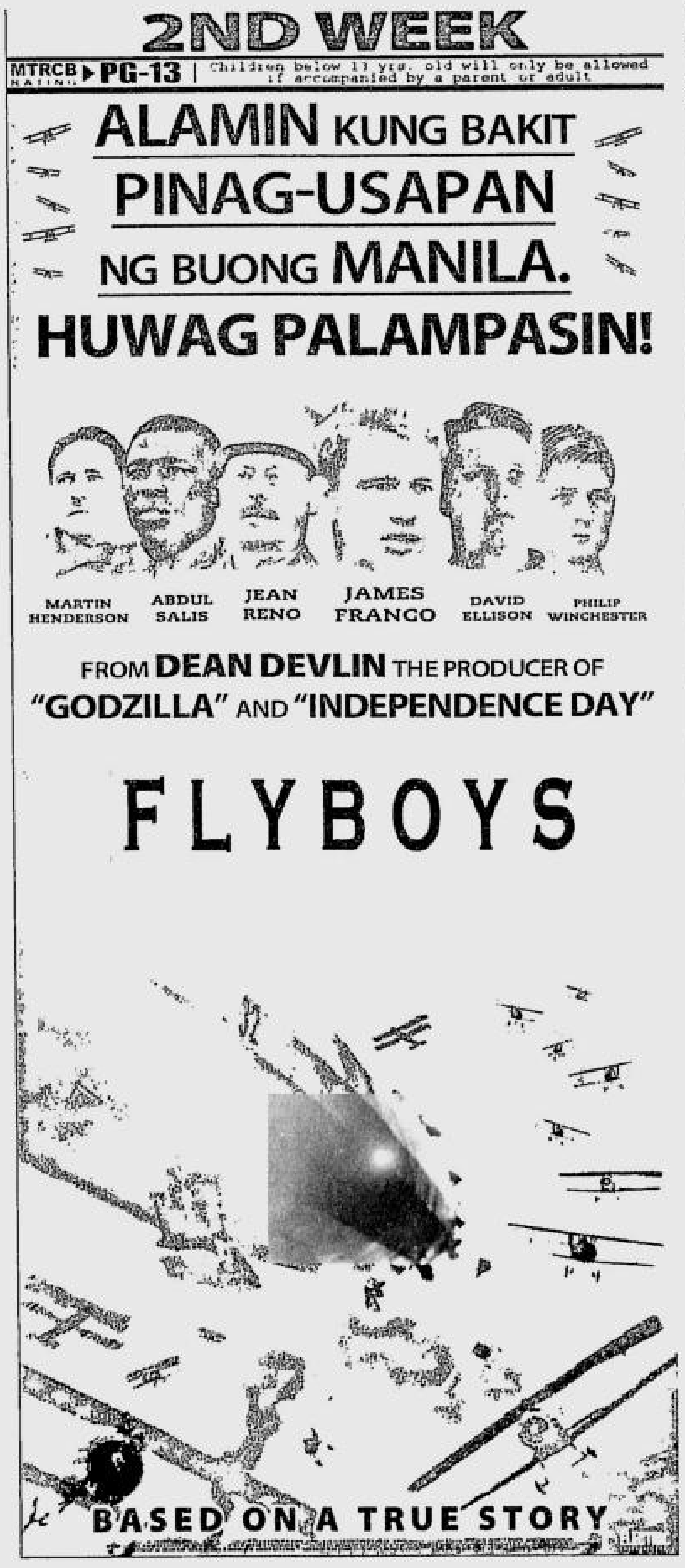
OCT 13 , 2006	GENEVA C. , AIZA S. , TRUEFAITH , JAY-R	8:00 PM
OCT 20 & 21 , 2006	GARY V. @ 23 "THE REPEAT"	8:00 PM

TEATRINO
PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY	CERRUDO . CLASSICO	8:00PM
OCT 12 , 19 , 26 , 2006	ISAY ALVAREZ & ROBERT SENA	8:30 PM
OCT 14 21, 2006	AYEN LAUREL & RAYMUND LAUCHENGCO	8:00 PM
	FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116	

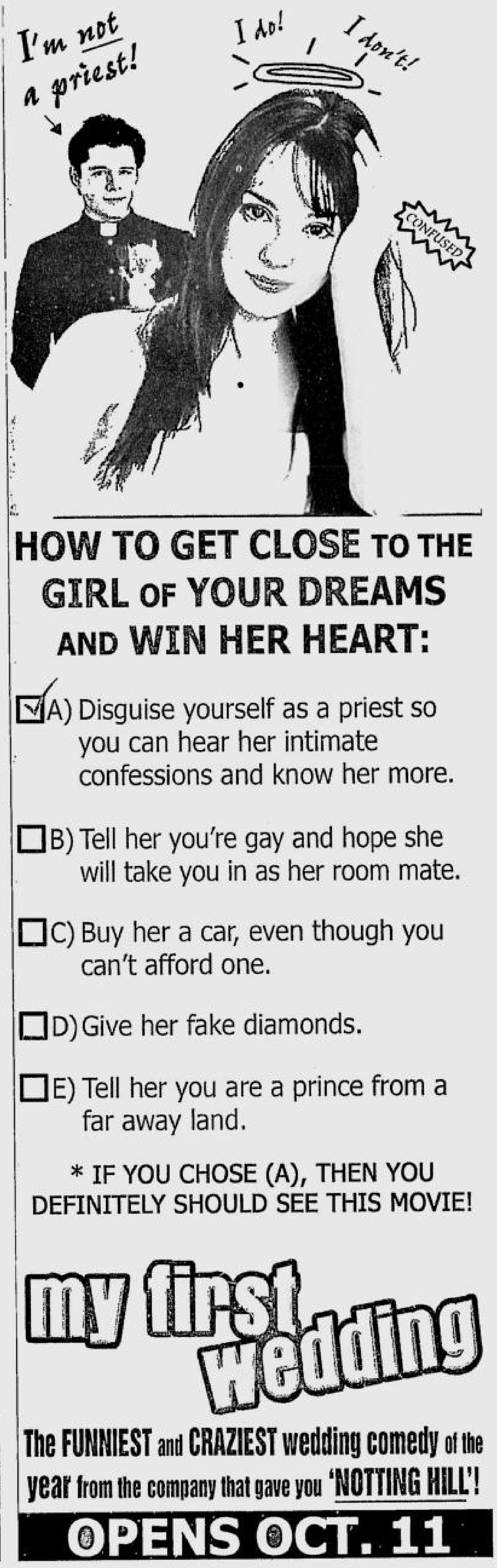
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
#1 MOVIE IN MANILA
NO RULES. NO MERCY. NO SURRENDER
3RD WEEK
DOA
DEAD OR ALIVE
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE TRANSPORTER"


2ND WEEK
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
ALAMIN KUNG BAKIT
PINAG-USAPAN
NG BUONG MANILA.
HUWAG PALAMPASIN!
MARTIN HENDERSON
ABDUL SALIS
JEAN RENO
JAMES FRANCO
DAVID ELLISON
PHILIP WINCHESTER
FROM DEAN DEVLIN THE PRODUCER OF "GODZILLA" AND "INDEPENDENCE DAY"
FLYBOYS
BASED ON A TRUE STORY

3RD WEEK
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
MANILA's MOST TALKED-ABOUT ROMANTIC-DANCE MOVIE
THE MOST INSPIRING UNDERDOG STORY OF THE YEAR!
HE'S SOMEONE NOBODY CARED ABOUT... UNTIL SHE CAME ALONG
AMERICA'S #1 HIT MOVIE!
Love begins with a first step.
Step Up
Channing Tatum star of "SHE'S THE MAN"
Jenna Dewan star of "TAKE THE LEAD"

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Where You Find The Best. JOB Market


I'm not a priest!
I do!
I don't!
CONFUSED

HOW TO GET CLOSE TO THE GIRL OF YOUR DREAMS AND WIN HER HEART:

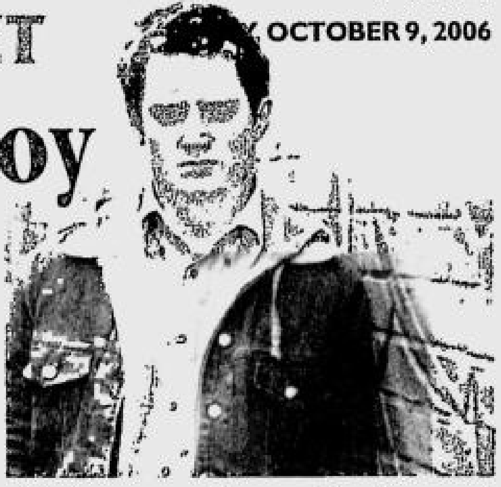
☑ A) Disguise yourself as a priest so you can hear her intimate confessions and know her more.
☐ B) Tell her you're gay and hope she will take you in as her room mate.
☐ C) Buy her a car, even though you can't afford one.
☐ D) Give her fake diamonds.
☐ E) Tell her you are a prince from a far away land.

* IF YOU CHOSE (A), THEN YOU DEFINITELY SHOULD SEE THIS MOVIE!

my first wedding
The FUNNIEST and CRAZIEST wedding comedy of the year from the company that gave you 'NOTTING HILL'!
OPENS OCT. 11

Just can't get enough of Shoppesville
noir
DOMINO
PEARL HARBOR
Greenhills Shopping Center
SHOPPESVILLE
GREENHILLS
Shop & Live!
www.greenhills.com.ph

Elijah Wood plays bad boy



ELIJAH WOOD (FRODO IN "THE LORD of the Rings" trilogy) reveals his dark side as he plays an American bad boy who gets entangled with gang violence in the streets of London in the acclaimed thriller "Green Street Hooligans," winner of the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award at the recent Tribeca Film Festival. Also starring Charlie Hunnam (UK's "Queer as Folk"), "Hooligans" will be shown exclusively at Ayala Malls Cinemas (Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3) starting Oct. 11.

TAKE FIVE

A searing film about soccer hooliganism with brutal, unflinching drama and violence, "Green Street Hooligans" tells the story of Matt Buckner (Wood), an American student who travels to London after getting kicked out of Harvard. Ostensibly there to visit his sister, Matt instead forms an unlikely bond with her husband's brother, Pete Dunham (Hunnam), who takes him to a soccer match to see his team, West Ham. At the game, the inevitable happens, and Matt's initial trepidation at the violence swelling around him soon turns into a pulse-racing, visceral thrill.

The young actor talks about the film, the rabid energy of the sport of football and the violence inherent in the game.

Were you exposed to international football before being involved in the project?

I had very little knowledge but I was electrified when I went to an actual West Ham match. It really is unlike any sporting event I've ever been to in my life. There's this kinetic energy that runs through the crowd both before and during a game. We don't really have anything quite like that in America. It's essentially the fans that make it. The game is exciting but it's the fans and their absolute passion and devotion and rabid, dog-like, manic energy that makes it what it really is. I could go to football games for the rest of my life just to experience that energy because it's a rush unlike anything I've ever felt.

Did you actually get to witness any violence?

No, I didn't, but we went to the West Ham v. Millwall game and apparently it did kick off post match. Before and during the match there was a rush of impending danger and there was a massive police presence because West Ham and Millwall hadn't played each other in something like 15 years. It was huge because they are absolute rivals and this is something we deal with in the script.

What made you take on a role in such a relatively small film?

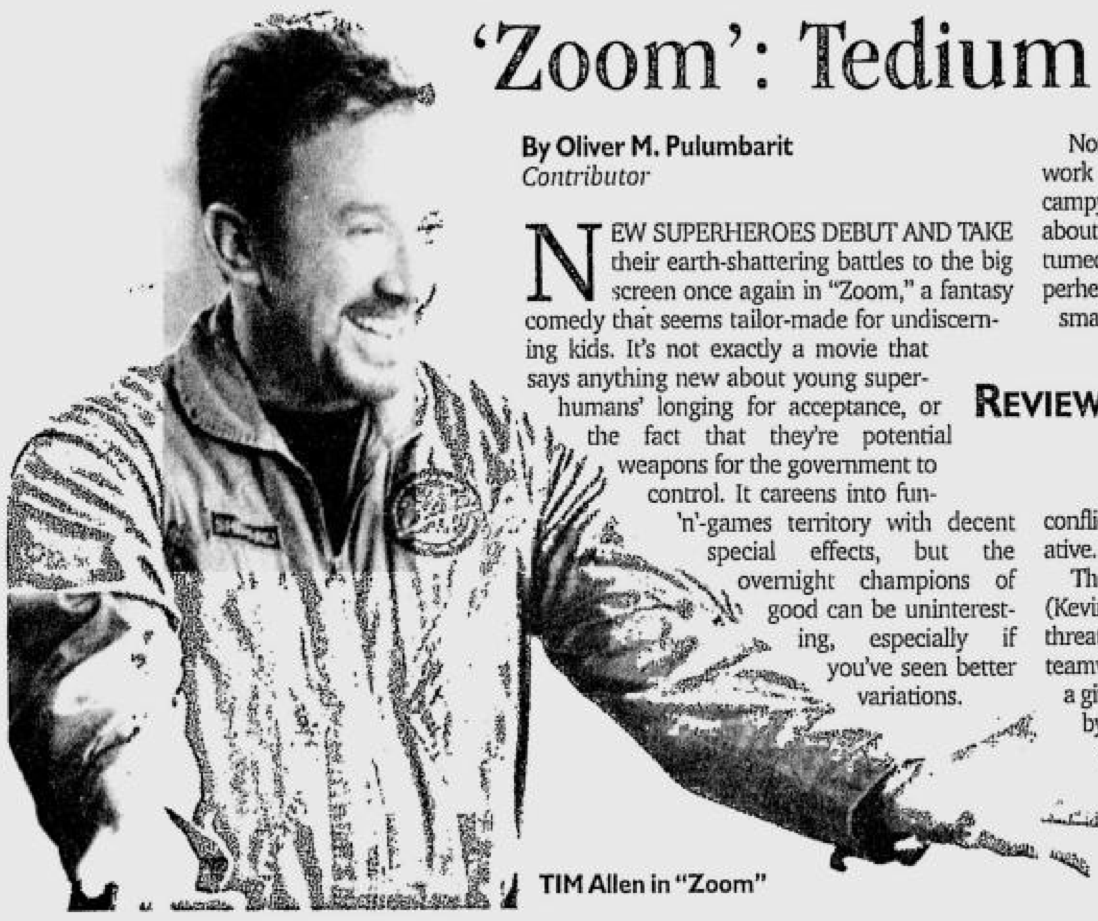
Doing something like "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy, which was so massive and had such huge appeal, put me in the limelight as one character for so long. My interest was to do something completely different after that, which has always been my philosophy. I look for roles that stretch my ability and challenge me as an actor, something that takes me to places I've not been before. When I read the script of 'Hooligans,' though I wasn't necessarily familiar with the context of the story. The character of Matt was intriguing to me because he starts off as this innocent and essentially becomes a hooligan by the end of the film and that character arc, and the world in which it takes place, really intrigued me. Plus smaller movies appeal to me in general because I think that there's often more opportunity for interesting character development with adventurous storytelling and more intimate character relationships.

What attracted you to play Matt Buckner?

Matt's such a complex character. He doesn't really have much security in his life. He doesn't have a solid base. He doesn't feel like he's got any kind of close family ties or any close friends, so there's something of the wanderer about him. And because he doesn't have a relationship with his father and he's estranged from his sister, when he's kicked out of Harvard he's completely at sea. He lacks personal confidence and he doesn't quite know who he wants to be, so the gang ends up becoming his family and that whole experience is what ultimately helps to define him as a human being and get him back on track.

'Zoom': Tedium in tights

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor



TIM Allen in "Zoom"

REVIEW

NEW SUPERHEROES DEBUT AND TAKE their earth-shattering battles to the big screen once again in "Zoom," a fantasy comedy that seems tailor-made for undiscerning kids. It's not exactly a movie that says anything new about young superhumans' longing for acceptance, or the fact that they're potential weapons for the government to control. It careens into fun-'n'-games territory with decent special effects, but the overnight champions of good can be uninteresting, especially if you've seen better variations.

Non-animated, comics-inspired material can work as comedies, as evidenced by last year's campy but fun family film "Sky High." That's about a special school that's run by veteran costumed heroes, while "Zoom" is about a former superhero, Captain Zoom (Tim Allen), who trains a small group of youngsters selected to fend off an impending super-invasion. Both films have other similar components, like the next generation of heroes' trial by fire, and a crazed arch-villain from their mentors' past. "Zoom" is simpler in many aspects, but it went for a more complicated conflict by making its bad guy the hero's fallen relative.

Their arch-foe—codenamed Concussion (Kevin Zegers)—is Zoom's brother, a powerful threat that, nevertheless, will be defeated by teamwork, sheer numbers, and a little luck. That's a given, but that predestined conflict is preceded by typical snippets of character development, accompanied by cobwebbed, hero-themed pop songs (Five for Fighting's "Superman" and Enrique Iglesias' "Hero"). Well, the movie goes through the motions; it has its warm and fuzzy teacher-student bonding moments, and gross-out gags that involve super-enhanced snot, gas, and spit.

Captain Zoom is practically a grouchy and irritable version of Allen's old "Home Improvement" character. He reveals a more familiar fatherly side once he warms up to his trainees, and trades his sarcasm for genuine words of encouragement. Another former sitcom star, Courteney Cox, appears as a very clumsy scientist-comic book geek, who embarrassingly trips and slips at the worst possible moments. Chevy Chase also portrays a scientist, but one that later becomes a pitiful butt of unfunny practical jokes. The young actors—Ryan Newman, Spencer Breslin, Michael Cassidy and Kate Mara—do okay, but they play stock misfit characters. They have the charm department covered, though.

The big fight sequences utilize the usual barrage of special effects, but are brief and lack impact. What "Zoom" does a little differently is the eventual re-integration of the four young heroes into their predominantly regular human communities. They have no secret identities, and are accepted despite their unusual abilities. This new team vows to fight more extraordinary threats in the future. But it's really hard to care for the characters. Good live-action superhero movies can make one feel involved with child-like enthusiasm, but this adventure, sadly, just feels tedious and redundant.

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